

Rich^d. Hall?



Division

SCB

Section

1798

v. 8

LETTERS

ON

Spiritual SUBJECTS,

AND

Divers OCCASIONS;

SENT TO

RELATIONS and FRIENDS.

Mrs. Anne Dutton

*By One who has tasted that the LORD is
GRACIOUS.*

*Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one
another, even as also ye do, 1 Thes. v. 11.*

VOL. VIII.

L O N D O N :

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LETTER

Spiritual Subjects

Divers Occurrences

THE HISTORY OF THE

BY JOHN H. ...

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LETTERS

ON

Spiritual Subjects, &c.

LETTER I. To Mr. W.

Ever Dear and Honour'd Father,

WITH abundant Thanks for all your Kindness, I send a Line to tell you, That the LORD is infinitely *Good to me*, even *still*, a SEA of *Goodness*, that flows out upon me in rich Streams of *Loving Kindness* continually! Oh how full is *my JESUS*! and how free in the Distribution of all his Grace to *me*! — And this JESUS, is *your JESUS*, my dear Father! This LORD, is *your Lot, your Part, your God, your Guide even unto Death, the Strength of your Heart, and your Portion for Ever*! — What then can you want? Oh live continually *upon*, and *to*, your own LORD JESUS! Labour after a growing Acquaintance with, and Conformity to Him, until that which is *Perfect* shall come. Oh how *rich* are you in CHRIST! In HIM, in whom all the unsearchable Riches, and Glories of the GODHEAD dwell! You have never yet seen a *Thousandth Part* of the Excellency of *your Beloved*! There is an unsearchable

Depth, an infinite Height, a boundless Breadth, and an eternal Length, of *Glory* in *Him*! — But what shall I say? Words *fail*; there is such an Immensity of *Glory* *behind*! Neither the Tongues of Men, nor of Angels, can fully *Tell*, no, little can they *Tell*, were they employ'd to an eternal Space, *What your Beloved is!* HE IS WHAT HE IS! His Name is, I AM THAT I AM! No *Knowledge*, but that of *His Infinite Understanding*, is a Line long enough, to sound this immense OCEAN of *Glory*! Or to *Tell what your Beloved is!* — But what HE *is*, He is for *You*! All his immense Glories, are a SEA of Bliss, for *You* to swim in, to live in, and to delight yourself with, thro' Time, and to Eternity! — Wherefore, Follow on to *Know Him*, and let not Trifles divert you from Him, or disturb your Rest in his Bosom. Possess CHRIST daily by Faith; and in HIM you will be so *full*, that you can want *Nothing*, altho' you were surrounded with a *Thousand Wants*! And so *happy*, that you will fret at *Nothing*, altho' you were encompass'd with a *Thousand Provocations*! We can never want Happiness, nor be pinch'd thro' with Miseries, unless we go out of our God! When we forsake our *Rest*, all is *Trouble*. When we return again to the Bosom of God, and so long as we abide there, *all is Peace*. Oh Happy is that Man, that delights himself in the LORD: For HE shall give him the Desires of his Heart! — *Wishing all Peace and Prosperity; I request your Prayers: and am,*

Ever Yours, at all Obedience,

L E T.

LETTER II. To Mr. W.

Ever Dear and Honour'd Father,

YOUR kind Letter I receiv'd, and return abundant Thanks. — May the LORD bless you abundantly, in Soul, Body, and Circumstance! May you live *from Him*, and *to Him*, and rejoice in *Hope* of that happy Day when you shall live *with Him*! Yet a *little while*, and we shall see JESUS, be perfectly like him, and for ever with Him! The great Thing *now*, is to *serve Him*. This little Inch of Time, is all the Opportunity we shall ever have to Glorify Him before Men. Oh who would not work for such a Dear, Glorious MASTER, as CHRIST is! He will make all his SERVANTS that work for Him *now*, sit down to Meat *ere long*, and HE Himself will come forth and *serve them*! Joy and Rest, Crowns and Thrones, of an eternal Duration, await the *Servants* of the *Prince of Peace*! Our Lives are just drawing to a Close. Oh let us labour to do something for CHRIST, before we enter into our eternal Rest! And when we can't honour Him in *Doing*, let us labour to glorify Him in *Suffering*: in patient, humble, thankful Submission, to all the Strokes of his kind Hand: That CHRIST *may be magnify'd in our Bodies, whether it be by Life, or by Death*. — Wishing all Prosperity, and requesting your Prayers; I remain, with the greatest Love and Duty,

Your obedient Child,

L E T T E R III. To Mr. I.

Dear and Honour'd Brother,

YOURS I receiv'd, and return hearty Thanks for it. Oh dear Sir, how blest are you, that you can say, "I know I am a poor vile *Sinner*!" That you have any Degree of *Feeling* of your lapsed degenerate State; *such* a Feeling of it, that makes you sensible of your *Need* of the SAVIOUR! This is a blessed Effect of the *Grace* of the *new Covenant*; and an Evidence that you are under it. We are all of us, even the whole Race of Mankind, while in a State of Nature, *Children of Wrath*. We are under the Declaration of Wrath in the Sentence of the Law, and filled with Wrath and Enmity against God. We are Enemies in our Minds by wicked Works. And being thus estranged from God, we have neither Will, Skill nor Power, to return unto him by Jesus Christ; and are cover'd over with a deep *Insensibility* of our extreme *Misery*; or in a Word, *Dead in Sin*. — But when the Time of Calling Love comes on, wherein the Chosen of God are to find Mercy, and to be brought under the Dominion of Grace; the LORD passeth by, sees them polluted in their own Blood, and in the Infinity of his Love, saith unto them, *Live*. And by that Life-producing Voice, takes away the *stony Heart out of their Flesh*, and gives them an *Heart of Flesh*. A new Heart, capable of a quick *Sensation* of their deep and extensive *Misery*; that hereby they may be *prepar'd* to receive that glorious Remedy, which was prepar'd for *them*, in God's Counsels and Covenant about the *slain Lamb*, before the World's Foundations were laid. Oh this eternal *Love*! This free, this preventing *Love*! This
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Life-giving, saving *Love*; which *began* our Salvation in an infinite Depth of *Mercy*; and will *finish* it, unto unknown Heights of endless *Glory*! — Rejoice and be thankful then, my dear Brother, for that Knowledge which is given you, of your being a poor vile *Sinner*. And be assur'd, that you shall still *increase* in it, under the Teachings of the *Holy Spirit*, who is given to dwell in you for this blessed End, To *convince* you of *Sin*.

Again, How happy are you, in that you “ know “ that *God so loved the World*, that He gave his *only-begotten Son*, to die for poor, vile, unworthy Sinners!” Oh, *This* keeps you from *sinking* in deep Waters! From *perishing* in the miry Pit, the amazing Gulph of your own Vileness and Unworthiness; *Here's* the *Rock*, the strong, the eternal *Rock*, the *Rock of Ages* beneath you! And can you *sink*, think you, when so mightily *Under-propp'd*! — I compassionate you, my dear Brother, in that you can seldom say, “ That the Son of God was given for *You* in particular.” — Why do you *doubt* it? Is it because of your great *Unworthiness*? The SAVIOUR was given for the *most unworthy*. *No Money, no Price*, is requir'd, to partake of CHRIST, and all the *Salvation* that is in *Him*. Do you *doubt* his being given for you in particular, because of that horrid Mass of *Iniquity* which is in your vile *Nature*, which too often works and prevails, in Thought, Word and Deed? The SAVIOUR was given for the *Chief of Sinners*. And who is a *God like unto our God*, that *pardoneth Iniquity*, that *passeth by the Transgression of the Remnant of his Heritage*? That multiplies to pardon, our multiply'd Provocations, according to the Immensity, and Eternity of his own Grace! — But if you *doubt* whether the Son of God was given for *you* in particular;
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consider, That He was given to be *believed in*: That *whosoever* believeth in Him, *should not perish, but have everlasting Life*, John 3. 16. This Word, *whosoever*, as it stands connected with what follows, is a glorious Call to *you*, to *me*, to every poor Sinner, and especially to such that see their Need of the SAVIOUR, to *believe on the Son of God*: And a glorious Description of the Person, and Persons that shall be *saved*, in Consequence of the SAVIOUR's being given for every of them in particular, even for every of them that *believe in his Name*. — And if you doubt the *Truth* of your Faith in the given SAVIOUR; consider what *Faith* is. It is an hearty *Approbation* of CHRIST, as the *Project* of infinite *Wisdom*, and the *Provision* of infinite *Grace*, for the *Salvation* of *lost Sinners*. It is *such* an *Approbation* of the given SAVIOUR, that attracts the Soul after Him as *Altogether lovely*; and enables it to look *to*, and rest upon CHRIST *alone*, for its *own Salvation*, as held forth to poor Sinners, in the indefinite Promises of the glorious Gospel. In a Word, It is the Soul's *Persuasion* that CHRIST is the alone SAVIOUR; and its *Embracing* of Him as such.

Now then, my dear Brother, How is it with *you*, in those happy Moments when you are blest with some Prospects of the *Glory of CHRIST*? Do you *like Him*? Is He *amiable* in your Eye? Is He *All Desires* to you? Doth your Heart *cleave to*, and *clasp about Him*, as precious in *Himself*, and as precious unto *you*? — If so, you are one of them that *truly believe on the Son of God*. And for *You*, for *You* in particular, the great SAVIOUR was *given*. And as He was given for you, He is given *to you*; and in and with *Him*, all *Salvation*, is and shall be given you *freely*. You *shall not perish, but have everlasting Life*. God has
given

given unto you *eternal Life*, in and with his Son ; by the free, irreversible *Grant*, the free, unchanging *Promise* of the blessed Gospel. The *Word* is gone out of his Mouth in *Faithfulness* ; He will not, *cannot lie*, nor ever *repent* of what He hath said. — Oh, *set to your Seal*, That God is true ; and *doubt* your Interest in CHRIST, his being given for you, and to you, *no more* ! Your *Beloved* is yours, and you are *His*. You are *married* unto the LORD. And your Marriage Union, and his Relation-Love to you, which secures yours to *Him*, shall never, never be *broken*. But your Communion with Him, in Grace and Glory, shall from henceforth *increase*, thro' *Time* and to *Eternity* !

I am glad you think *meanly* of yourself. The *meaner* we think of *ourselves*, the more will our Lord be *glorify'd* in us. We are not saved, to be *something* in *ourselves* ; but to be *All* in CHRIST. Oh how doth our accursed *Pride*, rob our Lord of his Crown ! — What you *know* of the *Things of God*, is all of *Grace* ; and more and more will the *Spirit of Grace* teach you. — Doubt not your *Call* to the *Ministry*, because you han't such *full Assurance of Faith*, as some *others* have. For our Lord saith, Let him that *Heareth* (that hath some good Measure of Knowledge in the Doctrines of Grace, and spiritual Gifts for the Ministry) *say Come*, Rev. 22. 17. It is as if our Lord should say, ' Let ' such Souls, that have *heard* of my *Glories*, under ' the *Teachings* of my *Spirit*, invite poor *Sinners*, to ' come to ME the sent SAVIOUR ; let 'em tell them ' of my *Fitness*, *Fulness* and *Freeness* to save to the ' uttermost. Altho' they han't such a full *Persuasion* ' of their *Interest* in me, as my *Bride* hath ; as such ' Souls that have been more indulg'd with my Bo- ' som-Embraces ; who out of the Exuberance of

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‘ their Joy and Love, most freely and naturally, say, ‘ *Come.*’—And tho’ you mayn’t yet have arriv’d at such a Degree of Knowledge in the *Mysteries of Grace*, as some *other* of your Brethren in the Ministry : Yet observe what our Lord saith in this Word, *Let him that heareth say Come.* “ Not only him that *hath* ‘ heard, but him that *heareth*, that is still *learning* ‘ my Mind ; let *Him* preach ME, so far as He knows ‘ me. And be a *Witness* of the Things which he hath ‘ *seen*, and also of those Things in which I will yet ‘ *appear unto him.*’—And as the Lord favours you with his *Presence in Preaching*, and has given you some *Seals* of your *Ministry* ; He has in these *Respects*, indulg’d you with *Lumps of Sense*, to encourage your *Obedience of Faith* therein.——Your compassionate MASTER, sees, yea, feels the *Pressures* you labour under ; and will suitably *support* you. What tho’ you are like a *bruised Reed* ; He will not *break* you. Tho’ like *smoking Flax* ; He will not *quench* you : But *bind up*, and *strengthen* your Faith and Love, and bring forth for you, *Judgment unto Victory.*——That *all Grace may abound towards you*, is the hearty Desire of, Sir,

*Your Affectionate Friend in JESUS,
and Servant for his Sake,*

L E T T E R I V . T o M r . T .

My very Dear and Honour’d Brother,

YOURS I receiv’d,——And who knows, my dear Brother, but *You* may be the *Man* whom the Lord hath made *Choice of*, by whose *Mouth* some
of

of these poor *Souls* shall *hear the Word of the Gospel*, and *believe*? Oh! come and see, if our Dear, our Great *Shepherd* hath not some of his lost *Sheep* to bring Home by *You*. Who knows but you may have some given you *here*, that shall be your *Joy*, and *Crown of Rejoicing* in the *Day of the Lord Jesus*? Oh my dear Brother, It is precious Work to Preach *JESUS*, that *Altogether Lovely ONE*! And Oh what a Privilege is it to be made a *Fisher of Men*! If the SAVIOUR hath Work for you to do *here*, my Brother, you *must* do it; as our Lord *must needs go thro' Samaria*. Come, my Brother, it's worth while to take a little Pains, to weary yourself to *serve JESUS*, your *Beloved*, the *Lord* that hath bought you with his *Blood*, and will crown you with his *Glory*! Come, come a *Wooring* for *CHRIST*. Come *Tell* of all his *Glory*, how highly his *Father* hath advanced him, and how willing he is to receive *Sinners* into his own Embraces. And *see* if there be any here, that are willing to be *Married* to the *Son of God*, to the *Heir of all*! And [tho' you should be *weary* and fatigu'd in your Journey; remember, *CHRIST* was so, and sat thus on *Samaria's Well*. And yet He came with infinite Delight to do the *Will of his Father*, when *there* He was to bring Home that poor *Woman*, loved and chosen of Old, and other *Vessels of Mercy*, to *HIMSELF*, the *Well of Life*, to fill them with *Glory for Ever*. Come, my dear Brother, tho' you come thro' *Storms*; *CHRIST* will *Recount* all the weary *Steps*, you ever took in his *Service*; and richly will He reward your present *Labour*, with eternal *Rest*, with a *Crown of Glory that fadeth not away*! — Praying that the *Good Will of HIM that Dwelt in the Bush* may be with you, and that you may be brought

amongst us, in the *Fulness of the Blessing of the Gospel* of CHRIST; I remain,

Dear Sir,

Yours most Affectionately in the LORD,

LETTER V. To Mrs. M.

My Dear Sister in Christ,

I Hope you are still help'd to rejoice in the Lord, your own God, who will *never, never leave, nor forsake you.* All our Way thro' the Wilderness, was laid out for us by infinite Wisdom and Grace. All our Crosses and Comforts, were of old appointed, are wisely mixed, and shall be graciously and powerfully Over ruled, for the Glory of God, and our present and eternal Advantage. Oh my dear Sister, all Things are *well ordered* for us, in God's everlasting Covenant. Wherein he hath said, *I will be unto them a God, and they shall be unto me a People: and their Sins and their Iniquities will I remember no more.* And where Remission of these is, all Things must needs go well. For, *Blessed is the Man unto whom the Lord imputeth not Sin.* Blessed is he in all Conditions: Every Thing comes to him as a Blessing. — And shall we be afraid of our Blessings? We have God, our own God in all, in every Cross, and in every Comfort. And is not HE enough to make the one full, and the other sweet? We need not fear, *tho' the Earth were removed, and tho' the Mountains were carried into the Midst of the Sea: Tho' the Waters thereof rore and be troubled, tho' the Mountains shake with the Swelling thereof:* (Tho' all be in Confusion round about us) since

since GOD is our Refuge and Strength, a very present
Help in Trouble: And since, *There is a River, the*
Streams whereof shall make us glad, in the most sor-
 rowful Circumstances. Oh was it not for *Unbelief*,
 we should never be disquieted with any Thing that
 passeth over us. We may lye at Anchor, by Faith
 and Hope, in the roughest Sea. The Bosom of God,
 is a quiet Harbour, where we may delightfully rest,
 when all is tempestuous round about us. Had we
 more Faith in God, and Love to Him, we should ne-
 ver stir out of his Bosom, into Disquietude, to his
 Dishonour, and our own Grief, in the most trying
 Circumstances. Oh what Fools are we for so doing!
 If GOD cares for us; what need we be anxiously care-
 ful about *ourselves*? If HE has ordered all Things
well for us, so well that nothing could be *better* than
 it is; what *Room* is there for Disquietude? Surely
every Man disquieteth himself in vain. If we were *one*
in Will with GOD, in every Thing, how *happy* should
 we be? What, for ourselves could *hurt* us, what could
grieve us, as we had *no peremptory Will* to any Thing;
 but what is the *Will of God* concerning us? And in
 the Will of God, towards us in Christ, we have such
 a *Fulness of Bliss*, such an *ALL of Blessings*, that we
 need not go out of *it*, to desire any Thing *more*. Oh
 had we more *Faith*, we should *lie down and rest*, and
 solace ourselves continually with *infinite Fulness*. *Thou*
wilt keep him in perfect Peace, saith the Psalmist,
whose Mind is staid on Thee. Whenever therefore we
 are tempted to go out from the Bosom of God, and
 drawn off from Him, let us instantly say, with *Da-*
vid, *Return unto thy Rest, O my Soul: for the LORD*
hath dealt bountifully with thee, Ps. 116. 7. May the
Peace of God which passeth all Understanding, keep
your

*your Heart and Mind thro' Christ Jesus! Requesting
your Prayers; I remain, my dear Sister,
Ever Yours in CHRIST,*

LETTER VI. To Mrs. T.

My Dear and Honour'd Sister in Christ,

MOST heartily I thank you for your kind Letter. The Lord made it sweet and savoury to my Soul. I rejoice in the great Things which the Lord hath done for *You*; and adore his free, infinite, condescending Grace, in blessing my poor Labours for your Encouragement and Comfort. Never was any poor Sinner, so unworthy of so high a Favour, as *vile me!* But the LORD *will be gracious, unto whom He will be gracious.* And therefore it is, that unworthy *I*, have found *Grace* in his Sight. The Lord hath *chosen me, and not cast me away.* Not for my Fore-seen Goodness, did He chuse me; for I had *none.* Nor yet for my Foreview'd Badness, did He cast me *away*, tho' He *saw* what a vile, ungrateful, God-provoking Creature I *should be.* But from the sovereign good Pleasure of his *own Will*, He chose me in Christ unto eternal Life, and unto some Degree of Service to his better Children. That He might thereby commend his infinite *Love*, and the exceeding Riches of his *Grace* to the *Chief of Sinners*, to the eternal *Glory* of his *great Name.* — Help me then, my dear Sister, to praise this Grace, which casts on me its resplendent Rays, with such an amazing Brightness!

Oh, I must join with you, and say, “I am ashamed that I have made so little Progress, since my first
setting

setting out in the Ways of God." Oh that *I*, that have been so *greatly beloved*, should *love so little*!

You say, my dear Sister, "That it is no small Joy to you, tho' you do so little for your Dear Lord, that He enables me to do much." This is an Evidence that you *love* JESUS. Indeed I am ashamed of my little *Doings*; and more of my little *Love*. If our kind Lord, enables *me* to do more for Him *one Way*, He may enable *you* to do more *another*. And if you think you can't *do* so much for Him as He enables me to do, you may *love* Him more. And that takes *Christ's Heart* exceedingly. Our JESUS is a *Lover*; and in infinite Condescension, He delights in *our Love*. You may bring more Glory to Him, in *loving Him*, and more delight his Heart, than poor, ungrateful *I*, with all my *little Doings*. — But why do I talk of my *Doings*? What *I* have done for CHRIST, is *his Work*, rather than *mine*. 'Tis *He* that works in me, both to will and to do, or *I* could do *nothing*. And when I look upon all the Work that CHRIST hath done by me, it appears *great*, a wondrous *Flow* of infinite Love to *me*! For which I owe Him *myself*, and Ten Thousand Times more *Praises*, than I *can give*. But when I look on what *I have done*, thro' his Assistance, it appears *little, very little*, when compar'd with what my Lord is *worthy of*, and with what my poor Soul wou'd gladly *do* for Him, if I *could*. And oh the *Imperfection* of my poor, little *Doings*! If my Lord's *Grace* was not *Infinite*! He would never cast a favourable *Eye*, upon any Thing I ever did for Him. — Oh, I must even drop my *Doings*. CHRIST's *Doings* for *me*, doth as it were *swallow them up*. His *enabling* me to do any Thing, and every Thing I do for Him, His *pardoning* the Sin of my *Doings*; His *washing* my defiled Services in his own Blood; His *accepting* and *presenting* them in his own Perfections;

And

And his boundless Grace, in *blessing* my poor Labours to the Souls of his Children ; are such *Wonders* of infinite *Love*, such *Works* of my glorious *Lover*, that seem to swallow up all my little Doings, as a *Drop* is swallowed up of a vast *Ocean* ! — And yet I know, the Prince of Grace, in the unsearchable Depth of his Love, will lose Nothing *He* has wrought by me, but call it *My Service* ; and say, *I was hungry, and ye fed me, &c.* — Oh who would not *love* such a SAVIOUR ! Who would not *serve* such a MASTER !

Come then, my dear Sister, the Grace of CHRIST is all *yours* ! Your *Beloved* is *yours*, and *you* are *His* ! Go chearfully on with the *Work* He *calls* you to. It is the *Generation-Work*, which his infinite Wisdom and Grace allotted for *you* ; and that whereby He will account Himself *glorify'd* in you. If *I* am call'd to *one Service*, and *you* to *another* ; we are both employ'd in the Service of the *same Lord*. As enabled then, let us give Him our *Hearts*, in what He calls us to ; and so shall we walk before Him, as his dear Servants, as his dear Children, as his dear Bride, unto *all Pleasing*.

Be diligent, my dear Sister, in the Use of all appointed *Means*, for your Growth in Grace: Because God works by Means. And thus, in the Way of your Duty, cast all the Care of your Soul's Prosperity upon HIM, who is the *Author* and *Finisher* of your *Faith*. It was the LORD alone, that began the good Work in your Soul ; and HE will finish it. CHRIST has the *Pattern* of all your *Glory*, given Him of the *Father* ; and He will go on to polish and brighten you, until He has brought you up to your *designed Perfection*. Until he hath made you a *perfect Beauty*, brimful of Grace, *Glorious* in *Holiness*, without a *Spot*, or *Wrinkle*, or any such *Thing* : And as such
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presents you to *Himself*, and to his *Father*, an Object of God's Delight! A meet Subject of his Communion-Love, unto Joy and Glory, endless and unknown!

Yield not, my dear Sister, to such Fears, "That you han't believ'd *aright*; because you see such Vileness in your own Heart." For none but those that have *true Faith*, have a *painful Knowledge*, of the *Plague* of their own *Hearts*. Such a Knowledge thereof, that makes them cry out, *Wo is me, for I am undone*, because of my *Uncleanness*! That makes them Heart sick of their *Disease*, and sick of Love-Desires after CHRIST, the glorious *Physician*.

But, my dear Sister, shall you fear your Interest in CHRIST, that have had such *assuring Testimonies* of his Love and Grace? What if you have lost the *Comfort* of those sealing Times; you han't lost the *Salvation* that was then seal'd to you. God's *Yea* and *Amen*, are upon all the *Promises* of his *Grace* towards *You* in CHRIST. And HE cannot *change*. HE is not a *Man*, that he should lie, nor the *Son of Man*, that He should repent. Once hath HE sworn by HIMSELF: And He will not *alter* the *Thing* that is gone out of his *Mouth*. He hath given his unchangeable *Word*, his inviolable *Oath* for your *Salvation*, in *fleeing* to his *Dear Son* for *Refuge*; that your *Consolation* might be *strong*. Oh receive it, and hold it fast, let neither Sin nor Satan wrest it out of your Hands. If you *believe not*; HE *abideth faithful*: HE cannot *deny* HIMSELF. Your *Dear Lord Jesus*, and *God*, even your *Father*, in Him, pities you when weak in Faith, pardons all the *Workings* of your *Unbelief*, and calls you to take Him at his *Word*, to count Him both *able* and *faithful* that hath *promised*, to do what He hath spoken to you of. And thus to

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give

give Him *Glory*, in the Face of a Thousand Improbabilities, which may appear in your own Heart. GOD has given his Word, his Oath, That believing on his Son, *you shall not perish, but have everlasting Life*: That you shall be saved from all Sin and Misery, unto all Grace and Glory. And *that's enough*. Thousands of Oppositions shall *fly* before it, as the *Darkness*, before his All-creating *Word*, when He said, *Let there be Light; and there was Light*. GOD's Love towards *You*, is free, and independent on any of your *Goodness*; infinite, and All-surmounting, over all your *Badness*; and his Truth and Faithfulness, are as *permanent* as his BEING, who is, The Everlasting I AM! CHRIST is your *Light*, your *Life*, your ALL: And in HIM you are *complete*, who is *Yesterday, To-Day*, and *for Ever* the Same. And as sure as you are now complete in *Christ*, you shall be so thro' Him. Because HE *lives*, *you shall live also*. — Wherefore be *strong*, and *stand fast in the Lord*, my dear Sister. I am,

Yours most Affectionately in our Dear Lord,

L E T T E R VII. To Mr. L.

My very Dear Brother,

I Kindly thank you for your last Letter. I rejoyce to see the *Lord's Work* carried on in your *Soul*; and that you are help'd to commit the whole Management thereof unto Him, whose *Hands have laid the Foundation*, and will bring forth the *Head-Stone*, the finishing Part, the Coronis of all, with Shoutings of *Grace, Grace unto it!* It was *Free Grace*; that chose us
in

in *Christ*, before the *World* began. It was *Free Grace*, that *redeem'd* us by the *Lamb's Blood*. It was *Free Grace*, that *call'd* us out of *Darkness* into God's marvellous *Light*. It was *Free Grace*, that hath held our *Souls in Life* hitherto, amidst a Thousand *Deaths* and *Dangers*. And *Free Grace*, in its own everlasting Arms, will still bear and carry us, thro' various *Deaths*, unto further *Increases of Life*, until we are ripened for, and brought into *Glory*. *Free Grace*, laid the *Foundation* of our *Salvation*, doth effectually *manage it*, and will gloriously *finish it*. — Alas, we can't live one Moment, without fresh Supplies from *Christ*; nor do the least Thing in his Service, spiritually, without renewed Strength from *Him* continually. — And yet, oh wretched Creatures that we are! when our *Lord* fills us, how prone are we, thro' that accursed *Pride* which remains in us, to rob Him of his *Glory*, as if *we* were *something*? And when we have thus provok'd our *Lord*, our *Life*, our *ALL*, to withdraw from us, as it were for a Moment, and leave us to ourselves, to shew us we are *Nothing*; then, oh then, thro' wretched *Unbelief*, how prone are we to think, we shall never *see*, or *do* Good more? — But well our Dear *Lord* knows how to pardon, and pity us, to humble, and exalt us, to empty, and fill us; and by all, to bring us further out of ourselves, into Himself, and cause us to *grow up into Him in all Things, as our Head*. — And, oh, what an unspeakable Privilege is it, that we have *such a Head*! Such a Head of *Government*! Such a Head of *Influence*! The Father gave *Him to be Head over all Things to the Church, which is his Body, the Fulness of Him who filleth all in all*! Oh, were we *single Creatures*, were we not in *Union to Christ*, we could not *stand*, were we ever so *perfect*. — The *Angels*, those Stars of

Light, that were not secur'd by *Electing Grace*, and gather'd under *Christ*, as an *Head*; fell from their shining Orbs, and became *black Devils*. — *Adam*, that happy, that perfect *Man*, who came out of his Maker's Hand in a Fulness of Creation-Purity and Nature-Bliss, standing upon his *own Bottom*, soon *lost it*, and became a miserable, guilty, filthy, *abominable Creature*. — How then should *we stand*, who have so little *Grace*, and so much *Sin* in us? And so many *Temptations* round about us? Whose *Grace*, is but as it were a *Spark*, amidst an *Ocean* of Corruption, agitated by fierce *Winds* of Temptation, which *threatens* its Destruction every Moment! — Oh here lies the Mystery, the Glory, the Security of a *Believer*, his Life is hid with *CHRIST* in *GOD*! A *Believer's Life*, is in Union to *CHRIST*, in an indissoluble Union, to an inexhaustible Fulness of endless Life, in the *Son of GOD*! A *Believer's Life*, is the Life of *CHRIST* in him. *He* lives; yet not *he*, separate from *Christ*, but *CHRIST* lives in *him*. And *because CHRIST lives*, and so long as *CHRIST* lives, a *Believer shall live also*. The weakest *Member* of the Body of *Christ*, is in Union to such a mighty *Head*, that he can never *fall*. That is, from his *new Life*, into the *Death of Unregeneracy*. No; *CHRIST*, in whom *all the Fullness of the GODHEAD dwells*, continually *holdeth his Soul in Life*. — And not only in his Life *maintain'd*; but it shall also be *increas'd*. The Life of *CHRIST*, in the Soul of a *Believer*, is an increasing, a Sin-killing, an All-conquering *Life*. *CHRIST*, his living Head, will live and reign in him, until all *Death*, of every Kind and Degree, is swallow'd up in *Victory*: Until all the Powers of his Soul, and all the Members of his Body, are filled brimful, of perfect *Life*, and endless *Glory*!

Then, my dear Brother, let us *bleſs GOD* for *JESUS CHRIST*,

CHRIST; for this *his unspeakable* GIFT! Let us rejoyce in the *Lord* our *Life* always, notwithstanding all that *Sin* and *Death* which works in *us*. For *we are*, and shall be *more than Conquerors thro' HIM that bath loved us*. And in the Way of our Duty, let us leave our *Lord's Work*, in his own Almighty *Hands*, and follow on to know *HIM, the Fellowship of his Sufferings, and the Power of his Resurrection, that we may apprehend that, for which also we are apprehended of CHRIST JESUS*. — The dear LORD JESUS be with you! I am, my dear Brother;

Most Affectionately Yours in HIM,

LETTER VIII. To Mrs. M.

My Dear Sister in Christ,

I Rejoyce to hear of the Lord's Goodness towards you, in upholding, and providing for you. I trust you feel the sweet Supports of the *everlasting Arms*, under all the Pressures you daily meet with. Every Child, my dear Sister, hath its Lot and Portion of *Trials*, each of us have our *own* Trials, which were appointed for *us*, by our Father's wise Love. And with our appointed Trials, a Sufficiency of *Grace* is provided for us, in God's *everlasting Covenant*, to carry us safely, profitably, and joyfully thro' them. Nothing comes to us by Hap or Chance. But every Thing we meet with, is the Fruit of *God's Counsel, the Counsel of his Will, the good Pleasure of his Goodness towards us in Christ*. The LORD reigns for ever, even our GOD. And therefore *the Children of Zion*, may be joyful in their King. For all Things must needs go well, for his Glory, and our Advantage, since all are in *his Hand*; are under the supreme Dis-

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pose of infinite Wisdom, Power and Grace. *Say to the righteous, It shall go well with him.* It goes well with the righteous, in *evil Times*. The LORD *hides them from Evil*, and under his Feathers are they secur'd from all Harm. Let Tempests rise, Winds blow, and Billows rore; those that are *Ark'd* in CHRIST, are *safe*, and may have *Rest* and *Joy* in troublous Times. Oh what can *hurt* that Soul, that dwells in CHRIST by *Faith*! If we abode in HIM, *Nothing* could hurt us. It is our going out of CHRIST, our departing from Him our Resting-place, by *Unbelief*, that wounds and grieves us. Alas! when we go out of the Bosom of CHRIST, we go from *all Peace*, into *all Trouble*. Oh *Fools* that we are, and *slow of Heart to believe*! The least *Burden*, is much too heavy for our *Shoulders*. Why then, don't we cast all our Burdens upon the LORD, whose *mighty Shoulder* is well able to bear us, and all our *Weights*? Why don't we *cast all our Care upon Him that careth for us*? Can we by *taking Thought*, add one *Cubit* to our *Stature*? Why then are we so *foolish*, to go out one Moment from the Bosom of CHRIST? When shall we understand the *Wisdom of Faith*, to make CHRIST our ALL, to look to HIM for *all*, and quietly and thankfully, to leave *all Things*, in his All-wise, All-gracious, and Almighty *Hands*? Oh could we do so, all Things would be *well*. Our Lord would be *All* to us, supply all our *Wants*, and order all Things *for us*; every Way like his great, his glorious SELF! Oh, a *Life of Faith on the Son of God*, ought to be the constant Life of a *Christian*. It is a God-honouring, a Heart-cheering, a Soul-enriching Life. Happy are they, who make the *Glory of God*, under every Trial, their greatest *Concern*, that have *no Will* but *His*, and that as having *Nothing*, possess *all Things* in HIM, who

who is their ALL! If CHRIST is ALL, and our ALL, if He has All in *Himself*, and will be All to *us*, what can we want *more*? What need we go out of our *Dear Lord*, one Moment, for any Advantage or Delight? What Good can we find *out* of Him, that is not to be enjoy'd *in Him*, transcendently, infinitely and eternally? Are Shadows *better* than Substance? Are Beams *better* than the Body of the Sun? Are Streams *better* than that broad River, that Ocean of Delights, which we have in the *Son of GOD*? What mean we, to catch at *Shadows*? To prefer *Trifles*? To *set our Eyes upon Things which are not*? Oh our Folly and base Ingratitude! Oh the infinite Grace of our forgiving God! Oh the All-conquering, the All-supplying Love, of our unchangeable Lord! Great Need have we to say, with the Disciples, *Lord, increase our Faith!* That so the Name of our Lord may be glorify'd in us, and we in Him, according to the Grace of our God, and the Lord Jesus Christ.—Wishing all Supplies out of Christ's Fulness, and requesting your Prayers for me; I remain, my dear Sister,

Ever Yours in our own LORD JESUS,

L E T T E R IX. To Mr. H.

My very Dear and much Honour'd Brother,

I Long to hear from you. I forget you not in my Prayers. I hope the Lord will recover your Health, and spare you as a Blessing to his Church. I know you judge it far *better* to be *dissolved*, and to be *with CHRIST*. But surely we have Need of your Abode in the *Flesh* a while longer. Sometimes I think, 'You ripen

ripen so fast, that our Lord will gather you soon.
 Glad am I, that under the rich Influences of Free
 Grace, you have been so mightily spirited for God,
 and borne upon the Wing in his Service. A rich,
 a weighty Crown of Glory, awaits you at Christ's Ap-
 pearing. Oh dear Sir, go on still, to love and serve
 JESUS, to do and suffer for him, till Time is done,
 and blest Eternity comes on. And then you shall
 serve Him perfectly and for Ever, without Interrup-
 tion, or Ceasation, among the flaming *Glories* of the
upper World! — And oh, my dear Brother, remem-
 ber *me*, a mourning Sinner, that longs to love JESUS.
 Oh pray that our Lord will, *baptize me with Fire!* I
 am ashamed and confounded at my *little Love to*
Christ. I am humbled, my Heart breaks, when I
 think how *much* there has been forgiven me, how
much Favour bestow'd on me, how *long* I have been
 acquainted with the Prince of Grace, and yet that I
 love Him *so little!* Oh *wretched Sinner* that *I am!* I
 am no more *worthy* to be put among the *Children*.
 And yet Free Grace, has given me the *Relation* of a
 Child, tho' I deserve not a *Name* among the least and
 last of my *Father's House*. I am glad my Heavenly
 Father, my Elder Brother, my Sanctifier and Com-
 forter, from an Infinity of Grace, knows how to bear
 with, and cure me; to heal all my Diseases, and to
 beautify me with all those Graces, which I see upon
 others of the Family. Oh, if *Jehovah's Grace* was
 not *Free*, infinitely, unchangeably and eternally *Free*,
 the least Ray of it, had never shone upon vile, wretch-
 ed *me!* But if the Lord *will be gracious* to the *Chief*
of Sinners; who or what shall hinder Him? I am ful-
 ly persuaded, that the *Grace of God*, is infinitely *suf-*
ficient for me. And I rejoyce, I exceedingly rejoyce
 in this *Grace*. I cast my *Soul*, my *needy Soul*, upon
 this

this *Grace*. I know it will work *Wonders*; and I wait for its glorious Influences, to change me more and more, into the *Love-Image* of *JESUS*, the glorious *First-born* of Family. But oh! I am *pained* with my present *Unlikeness*; my base Heart, my ungrateful Carriage grieves me. — Oh my Brother, if you love me, pray for me, that my Lord will haste, to make me *like Him*, to make me *love Him*. That I mayn't always have such a contracted Soul, and so little in me, to delight and honour, my glorious Lord! my glorious Lover! — *Great Grace be with, and upon you continually!* I remain, Dear Sir,

Yours most Affectionately, in our own

Dear LORD JESUS,

LETTER X. To Mr. S.

My Dear and Honour'd Brother,

YOURS I receiv'd, and return you hearty Thanks for it. I rejoice to hear, what God hath done for your Soul, in *shewing* you your lost, miserable State by *Nature*, in *revealing* his *Dear Son* in you, and his own infinite, free, everlasting *Love* towards you. Calling *Grace*, my Brother, is a Time-Fruit of God's Eternal Love. If you had not had an everlasting Standing in God's *old Love*, in the Grace of eternal *Election*, you had not been thus *drawn* with *Loving-kindness* in Time. And what was it, think you, that *mov'd* the Love of God towards you, that *mov'd* Him to Chuse *You*, and to resolve to be Gracious unto *You*, when he pass'd by *Thousands*? Was it your *foreseen Goodness*? Was you *better* than those

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that *perish*? No, you'll say, *in no wise*. No, my Brother, we that are *Vessels of Mercy*, on whom God will make known the *Riches of his Glory*, of his glorious *Grace*, were of the *same Lump* with those who are *Vessels of Wrath*, fitted to *Destruction*. 'Twas nothing made us to differ from *others*, but the free, sovereign *Pleasure* of the great Lord of *Heaven* and *Earth*. We were no better by Nature, than those who are now in *Hell*. And tho' *Grace* has made a *Change* in us, has form'd Christ's Image in our Souls, and blest us with a begun Conformity to God's First-born; yet is *Nature*, *corrupt Nature*, even in us that are call'd by *Grace*, no better yet. In us, *that is in our Flesh*, dwelleth no good Thing. Nothing that is good, nothing but what is bad, even an *Hell of Iniquity*, abides still in our *vile Hearts*.

What then shall comfort us in our Conflicts with the Powers of Darkness? Oh it is God's *Free Love*! His Sovereign *Love*, his Unchangeable, Everlasting *Love*, his Covenant-engaged *Love*! It is *This*, this *alone*, can give us *strong Consolation*. It was the good Pleasure of our Father's Will, to love us in Christ, with a Love that was and is, altogether *independent* on our Goodness. This free Love of God towards us, sought none of our Goodness, as a Motive of its Fixation upon us, nor doth it speak it as a Motive of its Continuation to us. No, the LORD *loved us*, not because we were *better* than others; but because it *pleased the LORD to love us*. So Free, so infinitely Free was the Love of God, that He resolv'd to love us *without* our foreseen Goodness, *notwithstanding* all our fore-view'd Badness, to *bestow* all Goodness upon us, to *maintain* all Goodness in us, and in the End to *fill us* with all Goodness, with every Kind and Degree of Goodness, to the utter *Exclusion* of all our *Badness*:
Or,

Or, in a Word, to make us *Holy, and without Blame before Him in Love*, and to keep us so, to the Days of Eternity!

And when Free Love has brought us up to our designed Perfection in *Grace*, we shall give it all the *Glory*; and wonder out *Eternity*, at distinguishing *Love*, while we each one for ourselves, warble out its Praises, with a *Why me, Lord! Why me!* Why should *I* be thus rais'd by Grace to eternal Glory, while a *Thousand Sinners*, no worse than *I*, fell at my *Side*, and *Ten Thousand* at my *Right Hand*! And all the innumerable Multitude of the saved Ones, shall jointly and together cry, *Not unto us, not unto us, O LORD, but unto thy Name*, unto thy Free Grace, in the whole of our *Salvation*, be the whole and eternal *Glory*!

And oh what Grace is it, my dear Brother, that mean Time, Heaven should come down to *meet us*, in this low Land! That now and then, under bright Displays of infinite Favour, we should be fill'd with heavenly Wonder and Joy, and thus begin the Works of Praise and Adoration, even while on this Earth! They are all *Heirs of God*, and have the *Earnest of the Spirit* given them, that are blest with these sweet Foretastes of *Glory*, of the *Enjoyment and Employment* of the *upper World*.

And having this Hope, thro' God's Free Love, of seeing JESUS as HE is, of being made like Him, and of being for ever with Him; what remains for us to do in the present State? Verily it is only this, To *purify ourselves, even as HE is pure*. The Gospel of God's Free Grace in Christ, brings *all Salvation* to us: And, *only*, says the Apostle, *let your Conversation be as becometh the Gospel*. Oh what great, what high Obligations, doth God's Free, Eternal Love, lay us under to live to its Praise in the present Time! And

the more the Love of God is shed abroad in our Hearts, the more holy, happy Christians, should we, shall we be. None are so Free, so gloriously Free, as those whom God's Free Love, binds most strongly unto all holy Obedience. *Bind us, O LORD, for ever, bind us with Free Love! Then shall we be Free indeed!*

Glad am I, my dear Brother, that you are helpt to settle upon God's everlasting Covenant, his Covenant of Free Grace in CHRIST, which is order'd in all Things, and sure. This is a solid Foundation for our Faith and Hope, an immoveable Resting-place, amidst a thousand Shakings, from within and without. Our Frames continually vary, and various are the Dispensations which pass over us: But the Covenant of our God, doth not alter; because the God of it don't change; and the Head of it, in whom all the Blessings of it are secur'd, is Yesterday, To-Day, and for Ever the same. Well then may this be our Support, both in Life and in Death. For tho' our Flesh and our Heart fail us, GOD, our New-Covenant God, is the Strength of our Hearts, and our Portion for Ever. Tho' the Mountains and Hills shall depart, the most lasting Parts of this lower Creation be dissolved, and Time itself put to a Period; God's Kindness towards us in CHRIST, shall not, depart, but run on in its own everlasting Round, thro' his Covenant of Peace, which shall not be removed, unto our Joy and Glory, Full and Eternal. — Wishing a rich Increase of all Grace, unto a weighty Crown of Glory; and requesting your Prayers for me: I remain, Dear Sir,

Your Affectionate humble Servant,
In the LORD the LAMB,

LETTER XI. To Mrs. T.

My very Dear Sister in Christ,

YOURS I receiv'd, I return you hearty Thanks. I rejoyce that you can say, concerning your late Trial, and your yet not ended Affliction, *Good is the Word of the LORD, which He hath spoken.* And that there was a *Need-be*, for your Exercise in these Regards. — Go on, my dear Sister, to believe the Love, and adore the Wisdom of your Heavenly Father herein. And to wait for the blessed Fruit of this his kind Chastisement. *Be in Subjection unto the Father of Spirits:* And *Life*, in the Increase of your Graces, in this World, and of your Crown of Glory in that to come, shall be the Effect of it. — And lo, God will be glorify'd in you, by this Trial, if you behave under it, like your Lord, and *learn Obedience by the Things which you suffer.* The State of God's People, and especially of his Favourites, in this World, is a *State of Suffering.* Whoever is at *Ease*, God's dear Children, his beloved Ones, shall not. They shall be empty'd from *Vessel to Vessel*, remov'd from *Trial to Trial*, to refine them the more. God will set the *Bush* He loves, on *Fire*, all on a *Flame.* But for the *Good Will* of HIM that dwells in the *Bush*, it shall not be consumed by the *fiery Trial*; but preserved green and flourishing under it: To the Glory of infinite Power, and boundless Grace, and to the Wonder and Praise of Men and Angels, thro' Time and to Eternity. Oh it's worth while, to turn aside, to see this great Sight: A *Bush on Fire and not consumed!* A weak Child of God, amidst *fiery Trials*, unkindled by the *Flame!* Yea, full of *Sap and Moisture*, growing, and increas-

ing

ing thereby! In such a Case, we are made a *Spectacle* unto God, unto *Angels*, and to *Men*. God looks on us with infinite *Pleasure*, sees his own Glories display'd, and our Graces exercis'd, and says concerning us, as of his Servant *Job*, *Still he holdeth fast his Integrity*. And, *I have chosen Thee in the Furnace of Affliction*. Good *Angels* rejoice, to see the Favourites of Heaven behave under fiery Trials, as becomes their high Relation to God, and the Greatness of that Love and Duty which they owe to Him. And with Joy they *wing the Way*, to carry the Tidings up to the Throne and Court above. *Evil Angels*, are confounded at such a Sight. Good *Men* behold with *Wonder*, Joy and *Praise*, this glorious Sight, A flourishing Saint, amidst fiery Trials. The *World* of unconverted Men, stand *Agast*. The Consciences of some are struck with *Fear*. The Souls of others *allur'd* to love and serve that God, who is so good to his suffering Servants, and works such *Wonders* for them. — How joyful then, my dear Sister, should we be in *Tribulation*? And how careful of our Behaviour under it, to answer the great *Ends* of it, while we are thus made a *Spectacle unto all*! — And lo, The LORD that is with us in Trouble, will deliver us out of it; to his great Glory, and our great Advantage — Let us then, my dear Sister, take the *Prophets* and Saints of old, and our *Brethren* the Saints now, who behave under Trials as they ought, for an *Example of suffering Affliction, and of Patience*. Since we have heard of the *Patience of Job*, and have seen the End of the Lord: That the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender Mercy. And that the LORD blessed the latter End of Job more than his Beginning. And let us, with the Primitive Saints, count them happy which endure. — And see you not, my dear Sister, that the Lord has rather shaken

shaken his Rod at you, than laid it upon you? And that He has begun to deliver you? Wait a while, and Weeping will be over. *The Night is far spent, a joyous Morning* hastens. And the Lord grant You, and your dear Yokefellow, with the Saints he may minister to, a brighter Day of *Gospel-Glory*, than ever! — *The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, be with your Spirit!* — In HIM, my dear Sister, I am,

Yours most Affectionately,

LETTER XII. To — —

My very Dear and much Honour'd Brother,

I With your Increase in *Grace and Gifts*. The Lord make you a bright *Star*, in the *Church-Heaven!* Clothe you with his *Glory*, and hold you in his *hand*, unto abundant *Usefulness* in the present *State!* And grant you a luminous *Sphere*, among the starry *Glories* of the *first Resurrection!* Believe on Christ, Brother, for your every Day's *Fitness* for the great *Work* of the *Ministry*. Bring your empty *Sacks*, your repeated *Wants*, unto JESUS your *Brother*: Of his *Fullness* you shall receive, and *Grace for Grace*. The *Residue of the Spirit* is with Him. HE can fill you with the *Holy Ghost*: And let *that* be the *Top* of your *Ambition*. Had you all the *Learning* in the *Universe*, without the *Holy Ghost*, you wou'd be a *sapless, favourless Minister* of the *glorious Gospel*. But *fill'd with the Spirit*; your *Learning* shall be *sanctify'd*, and made *subservient* to your Lord's *Grace*, unto his and your *Glory*. HE can give you a *learned Tongue*, spiritually so, to *speak a Word in Season* unto him that is
weary;

weariness; make you wise to win Souls; and successful to turn many to Righteousness: Who shall be your Joy and Crown in the Day of Christ. — His Grace be with your Spirit! In Him, with the most affectionate Esteem, I am, Dear Sir,

Your sincere Friend and humble Servant,

L E T T E R XIII. To Mr. D.

My Dear Love,

WE have aim'd at the *Glory of God*; and may quietly leave *ourselves*, and *All*, in *his Hand*. If he say, *He has no Delight in us*; I trust our Souls, humbled in the Dust at his Feet, shall reply, *Here we are, let the Lord do with us, as seemeth good unto Him*. It has been some Refreshment to me, that whatever the Lord doth with *me*, He will get *Himself* Glory. If He cast me to the *Dunghil*, if there I may but have Grace to love and adore, to bless and magnify Him, and to sound forth his *Praises*; methinks I can humbly *submit* to his *Holy Will*, and sweetly *acquiesce* with his good *Pleasure*. I had a pleasant Thought, 'That if I was to lose all my hop'd-for *Usefulness*, as God would be *glorify'd* thereby; I would rejoice in *his Glory* as my *Gain*, and take *that* for my *Heritage*.' No Reason have we to be distressed, when Things seem to make most against us. Because, as we are brought to God by the Lamb's Blood, we are brought into a *Communion of Interests*. And if we had more Faith and Love, we should delight in God's Glory, as our Gain, whatever He doth with us. If we were not sinfully *selfish*, our own Advantage, would not give us
a higher

a higher Joy, than God's Glory; but be in a due Subordination to it, and afford us the greatest Joy from it. We should rejoice in the Glory of God, for its *own Sake*; and in our Advantage, first and principally, as *God is glorify'd* thereby, and in a secondary Way, as *we are happy*, under the bright Display of God's Glory; And in Thanks and Praise, return the Glory of all to Him, which in Bliss and Joy, we receive from Him. If we sink into *Dejection of Spirit*, as if we had nothing to *rejoice in*, tho' all Things are always for the *Glory of God*; it is an Evidence of inordinate *Self-Love*. As on the other Hand, if we rejoice in the *Lord and his Honour*, when ourselves are *abased*; it is an Evidence, so far as we are enabled to do it, of *true Love* to God in the *Heart*.—But surely we talk like *Children*, when we say, Things make *against us*; we speak the Language of *Sense*, and not of *Faith*. For lo, all Things make *for us*, they together work for *our Good*. If they make against us in the *Particulars* which we desire, they make for us in the *Generals* that we wish, and serve to bring about every Jot and Tittle of that general and particular *Good*, which our All-wise, and All-gracious God hath allotted for *us*. It is not good for us always to be *exalted*; 'tis very profitable for us in the present State, to be sometimes in the *Valley of Humiliation*. Christ's *Lillies* in the *Valley*, with their *Heads bow'd*, in Faith and Love, to his *holy Will*, ripen apace for *Glory*, look very *beautiful*, and cast forth a *fragrant Smell*. "In the *Valley of Humiliation*, as Mr. *Bunyan* observes, the *Lord of the Pilgrims*, delighted much to *be*." And shall we be unwilling to follow our *Master*, if He *call us* into it; since thro' his chearing Presence, and gracious Influence, we shall *sing there*, and be brought *thence* with Advantage? If *Winds of Prosperity* bear

us aloft, lest we should be *exalted above Measure*, our Wise and Gracious God, will make Adversity a *Weight* for them. And lest we should be too much deprest, *He weigheth the Waters of Affliction by Measure.*

Have we not then the highest Reason, humbly, cheerfully and thankfully, to commit ourselves to Divine Conduct? The LORD will never leave his *own*, in the most *distressing* Circumstances; nor suffer any Distress to *light* upon them, but what shall *issue* in their eternal *Joy* and *Glory*. What Faith and Love, what Joy and Thanks, do we then owe to the God of Truth and Grace? Our *Happiness* lies, in *sanctifying* the LORD God in our *Hearts*, in every of his *Dispensations* towards us. In keeping close to God, in dwelling in Him, in walking with Him, and in casting all our Care continually, upon Him that careth for us. Our Life here, is one perpetual *Scene* of various *Changes*: All which, as wisely and graciously Overruled, by the Sovereign Lord of all, shall effectually prepare us for our *unchangeable* and *endless* *Glory* hereafter. The manifestative *Glory of God*, in every Thing that passeth over us, and our present and eternal *Advantage*, are inseparably *connected* with each other. Infinite Love, join'd them both together; infinite Faithfulness, secures the Links from breaking; and infinite Power, draws the unbroken Chain, thro' a continued Series of divers Events in Time, to the *Glor*ry of God, and ours with Him, to Eternity. And when the Whole of his Providential Dispensations towards us are *finish'd*, and all that *Glory* brought to his great Name by every Thing that was *design'd*; and all that Good brought to us, by all Things, which was *purpos'd*: *The LORD shall rejoice in his Works*: And pronounce concerning them, to the eternal Rest of his

his Soul, *They are all very good.* And when the Vail is taken off, and we see with one View, all the Works of God towards us, in their Variety, Harmony and Unity, exactly answering all the glorious Ends design'd; *we shall rejoice with Him:* And to the eternal Glory of his Name, and Rest of our Hearts, shall say, *He hath done all Things well!* — And the more we see, and say thus now, the more of *Heaven's Bliss*, we enjoy on *Earth*. Shall not *we* that are reconcil'd to God by the *Lamb's Blood*, be *one in Will*, be *one in Interest* with Him. If we *are not*, it makes *us* that are the *Friends of God*, look like *Enemies* to Him. Oh let not God and *us*, be *twain*, since *Jesus dy'd*, to make us *one in Himself*; *To whom be Glory and Dominion, for ever and ever. Amen.* — The Dear Lord *Jesus* be with thee! I remain,

Thy most Affectionate Spouse,

L E T T E R X I V . To Mr. L.

Dear Sir,

HAVING heard, that you are under much Concern about your Soul, and distressed with Fear that you shall be *Lost*: I was willing to write a Line to you. To tell you that *Jesus Christ* came into the *World* to save lost Sinners. For this you have his own Word: *For the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was Lost*, Luke 19. 10.

We are all by Nature *Sinners*: guilty and filthy we were in our first Father *Adam*, by *his first Sin*; and have receiv'd a guilty, filthy *Nature* from him. And thus were *born Sinners*, and have gone *astray* from

God, even from the *Womb*. And by every Sin, while we abide in a natural State, we go farther and farther off from God; and have neither Will, Skill, nor Power to return to him. And having forsaken our God, we have lost all true *Happiness* for our poor Souls which is only to be enjoy'd in *Him*. Having departed from our true and proper *Center*, we wander about continually, and can never find *Rest*. — And for our Sins, the righteous *Law of God*, pursues us with its Curses, and thunders out Wrath and Death against *every Soul of Man that doth Evil*. And thus, having lost our God, we have lost ourselves; lost all true Happiness, and brought upon us all Miseries in the Desert of them, and in the Beginnings of them too, in our Souls and Bodies, and are in apparent Danger of eternal Perdition. And by our Sin against God, *Satan* has got the Dominion over us, blindeth our Minds, hardens our Hearts, and leads us on in the Ways of *Sin*, down toward the Chambers of endless *Death*. — Thus all Mankind were lost by *Sin*; and might justly have been lost for ever, in the Abyss of *Eternal Misery*.

But lo, *The Son of Man* is come to seek and to save that which was lost! God sent forth his Son made of a *Woman*, made under the Law; To redeem them that were under the Law. The boundless Grace of God, provided a Redeemer for lost Sinners. And this was no other than his own Son, who thought it not Robbery to be Equal with God. God so loved lost Sinners, that He gave his only begotten SON: To take our Nature into Union with his Divine Person, to become the *Son of Man*. That so He, who was the Son of God, and the Son of Man, that had both the Divine and Human Natures, in his one Person, might become our JESUS. That He in the same Nature
that

that sinned, might destroy the Devil and all his Works, and save his People from their Sins, from that miserable lost State, which they had plung'd themselves into. And this He did by sustaining our Persons, taking our Law-place, bearing our Sin, and Obeying, and Dying in our Stead. — By which in his own Person, He has wrought out a compleat Righteousness to cover naked Sinners; satisfy'd Divine Justice to the Full for our Sins; destroy'd all our Enemies, and *obtain'd Eternal Redemption for us.* — And having finish'd the Work, God as *the God of Peace, brought him again from the Dead thro' the Blood of the everlasting Covenant,* rais'd him from the Grave, as a triumphant Conqueror over Sin, Death and Hell; and exalted him to his own Right Hand, to save Sinners to the uttermost. That same Jesus, which sav'd Sinners compleatly by the *Price of his Blood,* when He dy'd for them upon the Cross; now lives for ever upon the Throne, to save them by the *Power of his Arm.* This good Shepherd, *that gave his Life for the Sheep,* will not suffer any one of them to be eternally Lost. But He will go *after that which is lost,* until He find it; and when He hath found it, He will lay it upon his Shoulder, and bring it home to the Fold, to his Church below, and to his Church above, both in Grace, and in Glory, *rejoycing.*

Then Sir, Are you lost? Jesus Christ can seek and save you to the uttermost. He came on purpose to save lost Souls; and in this Work He exceedingly *delights.* He shed his precious Blood for lost Sinners; that in the Virtue thereof, He might employ his infinite Power to save them. Are you wounded by Sin? CHRIST'S Blood can heal you. *With his Stripes we are healed.* Have you no Righteousness to appear in before God, that will bear the Test of his holy Law, and strict Justice?

Justice? CHRIST has wrought out a Robe of Righteousness, to array naked Sinners, and make them appear Glorious in the Eyes of flaming Purity: His Name is, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. Have you no Strength to get the Victory over Sin, Satan and the World? Or to get out of the present Dress which you are in? CHRIST has an *Arm like God*, the *Arm of GOD*: In this LORD the SAVIOUR, there is Strength for the weakest Sinner: He can subdue your Iniquities, and bind all your spiritual Enemies: Bring you out of Darkness and the Shadow of Death, and break your Bands in sunder. Are you shut up as in Prison, under the Guilt and Power of Sin, and terrible Fears of Divine Vengeance? That JESUS who dy'd for Sinners, and bore the Wrath of GOD, to deliver us from the Wrath which is to come, is Authoriz'd by the Father, and Anointed with the Holy Ghost, to *proclaim Liberty to the Captives, and the opening of the Prison to them that are bound: To say to the Prisoners, Go forth, to them that are in Darkness, Shew yourselves.* Do you find that you have no Power to believe and repent? *Faith and Repentance are the SAVIOUR's Gifts: He is exalted at God's Right Hand to bestow them upon poor unbelieving, impenitent Sinners: To give Repentance and Remission of Sins, thro' Faith in his Blood.* And he has promis'd to *pour the Spirit of Grace and of Supplications*, upon Souls that want Grace, and can't pray; that they may *Look upon Him whom they have pierced, and mourn, and be in Bitterness for Him.* Oh, Sir, CHRIST can give you a believing Heart, a broken Heart, a praying Heart, in an Instant. For He is *Mighty to save! a God-working Wonders!* Yea, Wonders of Life for the Dead! In a Word then, Are you in a miry Pit, a Pit of Noise, where there is no Standing, where your Soul is terrify'd exceedingly, and from whence

whence you can in no wise deliver yourself? JESUS can bring you up from the miry Clay, out of this horrible Pit, and set your Feet upon Himself the Rock of Ages; and put a new Song into your Mouth, even Praise unto our God, for a full and everlasting Salvation, which of his boundless Grace, He always bestows freely. You are not sunk too low, for *Everlasting Arms* to reach you. Therefore wait patiently upon the LORD.

And now, Sir, as I have hinted *Something*, tho' I han't told you a *Thousandth Part*, of the Excellency of CHRIST as a SAVIOUR: What do you *Think of Him*? Do you see any Suitableness in this mighty SAVIOUR, to your Case as a *perishing Sinner*? Do you see any Beauty in Him, whereby you desire Him? Are the Breathings of your Soul after CHRIST, as the Desires of David after the Water, when ready to die for Thirst, he said, *Oh that one would give me of the Water of the Well of Beth-lehem to drink!* Are these the Longings of your Heart, "Oh that CHRIST would give me Him-
"self, and all that Life and Salvation that is in Him;
"that my thirsty, perishing Soul might drink its Fill,
"and live for ever!"—If so, then hear what he says to you: *I will give unto him that is athirst, of the Fountain of the Water of Life freely*, Rev. xxi. 6. See: Not a Soul that is *athirst* for CHRIST, shall perish and die for *Want* of Him! CHRIST, and all his Grace, is prepared on *purpose* for such Souls; and shall be bestowed upon them freely: Without Money, and without Price, without any Worth or Worthiness in them. They shall drink, and drink abundantly, thro' Time and to Eternity, of that *pure River of Water of Life, the Streams whereof make glad the City of God*.—Oh, Sir, if you apprehend yourself at *present* to be in a perishing Condition, you shall not be *eternally lost*, if you look unto JESUS. Cast your Eye therefore unto Him, as GOD's
Salvation

Salvation to the Ends of the Earth. He bids you *Look unto Him for Life*; and has said to every Looker, *Be ye saved.* He has granted Salvation to the worst, the chiefest of Sinners, that *look to Him for it.* And he will never, never *repent* what He has said, or be *worse* than his Word. He has said, *They shall come that were ready to perish.* Come then, dear Sir, cast your perishing *Soul* at the SAVIOUR'S *Feet*, and you shall *live for ever.* There is *Salvation in Him*; and there is *none* in any *other.* They must all *perish*, that do not look, that do not come to CHRIST: But not a Soul shall be *lost*, that comes at his Call, and casts itself in all its Misery, at the Feet of his Mercy. If you are afraid that you shall *perish*, come to JESUS. And if you fear that He will not *receive you*, come and *try.* You can *but* perish: Oh cast yourself at the SAVIOUR'S *Feet*, and resolve, That if you *do* perish, you will perish *There.* But Oh, be assur'd, that *This is no perishing Ground.* For CHRIST Himself says to you, *Him that cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out,* Joh. vi. 37.—And it is no Sign that you shall be eternally *lost*, because you now *see* your perishing State. For when CHRIST seeks and saves *lost Souls*, He always shews them their *lost Condition*; that so they may be willing to be *found of Him*, and *sav'd by Him* from all Misery, unto all Glory. Wishing this Salvation, I am, Sir,

Your Affectionate Friend and Servant in the Lord,

LETTER

LETTER—XV. To Mr. C.

Reverend and very dear Brother,

I Sympathize with you in your great Affliction, by the Withdraw of the Divine Presence, as to the warming, comforting, enlarging Influences of God's free Favour. Oh how sad is our Case, when our *Be-loved* is thus withdrawn from us! When CHRIST our Light, our Life, our Joy, steps aside for a While, then Darkness, Death and Sorrow cover us. The Beasts of Prey roar against us, with a 'Where is now your God? He'll be favourable no more; your Strength and your Hope, your Life, your Joy, your Usefulness in the present State, are perished from the LORD. You looked for Light; but behold, Darkness. In vain you cry for Help; for the LORD shutteth out your Prayers,' &c.—And happy is that Soul, who at such Seasons, is establish'd in the *Faith* of his *Interest* in God's everlasting *Favour*. An unspeakable Support is *This*, under greatest Pressures. Such a Man is arm'd against the Powers of Darkness. They can't pierce him to the Heart, as they do others of God's Children, with the Terror of an everlasting Separation from Him. Such a Soul, when stript of the Joys of spiritual Sense, can say in Faith, with the Church, *Re-joice not against me, O mine Enemy, when I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in Darkness, the LORD shall be a Light unto me. I will bear the Indignation of the LORD, because I have sinned against Him, until He plead my Cause, and execute Judgment for me: He will bring me forth to the Light, and I shall behold his Righteousness*, Mic. vii. 8, 9.—And glad am I, my dear Brother, that this is your happy Lot. By Believing in the Dark, you will give Glory unto God, in his infinite Grace, Power and

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Faithfulness;

Faithfulness ; and hereby you will enjoy sweet Peace, in the Midst of Trouble.—I hope, my Brother, that our dear Lord is return'd unto you again with Mercies, before this Time. But if *not* ; go on to trust in Him, tho' He should seem to slay you, to hope in his Mercy, tho' He should follow you with Rebuke, and to seek his Return, tho' He should seem to go further from you. And be of good Chear ; for all Things shall issue well, shall together *work* for your *Good*, and *turn* to your *Salvation*.—Do you *groan* under Deadness, Darknes, Bondage ? Oh *happy Soul* ! 'Tis an *Evidence* of your *new Life*, that you are a *Child of Light*, and have formerly walk'd in the *glorious Liberty* of the *Sons of God*. Else you would not know what the *Want* of these Things is. Do you *groan*, because your *Beloved* has *withdrawn* Himself ? 'Tis an *Evidence*, that *Christ* and *you*, have heretofore had sweet *Fellowship* with each other.—And lo, Those whom *Christ loves*, He loves unto the *End*. He will not, cannot hide Himself *long* from such Souls. His *Withdraw*, is but for a *Moment*, to set off the Glory of his *Return*, and further to display the Immensity, and Eternity of his *Kindness*. Those whom *Christ quickens*, shall never *die* ; shall never lose their new *Life*, nor suffer any *Decays* thereof, but in order to their further *Increases* therein. Those whom *Christ enlightens* with the *Light of Life*, shall not *walk in Darkness* ; in *total*, in abiding *Darkness*, nor in any *partial* *Darkness*, that shall not *end* in *Light*, and serve as a *Foil* to illustrate its *Glory*. And those whom the *Son makes free*, shall no more return to *Bondage* ; to a *State* of *Bondage*, nor shall any *Bondage-Frame* seize them, but shall be over-rul'd for their further *Freedom*, their more glorious *Liberty*.—In *Patience* then, my dear Brother, *possess your Soul*, and *wait* for your own *God* ; and you shall not be *ashamed*.

His

His Love, as it was free in its Fixation upon you, so it is and will be free, immensely free, in its Continuation to you, and in all its Emanations upon you. God's Love is like HIMSELF, Great, Sovereign, Unchangeable and Eternal. And it is secur'd to you, in Itself, and in all its glorious Fruits, unto your full and eternal Salvation, by the infinite Faithfulness of the strong, the immutable JEHOVAH, in his everlasting, his well-order'd Covenant. Infinite Wisdom, for the further Display of infinite Love, sees it meet, my Brother, that now for a Season, you should be in Heaviness thro' manifold Temptations, That the Trial of your Faith being much more precious than of Gold that perisheth, tho' it be try'd with Fire, might be found unto Praise, and Honour, and Glory at the Appearing of Jesus Christ. By the Darkness that now covers you, the Lord is preparing you for Light. By Deadness for Life; by Bondage for Freedom; and by Shame for Glory: Both present and eternal. For your Shame, you shall have double, double Glory; and for Confusion, you shall rejoice in your Portion. The Evening and the Morning, you know, were the first Day: &c. Your present Darkness, is but the Forerunner of Light. Another Day, of further Glory, awaits you. The Lord hasten its happy Dawn, and make its Meridian-Brightness great, in your dear Soul, in your Family, and in the Church of God! So prays,

Dear Sir,

Yours most Affectionately in CHRIST,

LETTER XVI. To Mr. L.

My Dear Brother in Christ,

I Heartily thank you for your last. By the Contents of it, I am made to admire the Riches of sovereign Grace, in *your*, in *my Salvation*. CHRIST, as the only Way of Salvation, is a *Path*, that the *Vulture's Eye*; that no unregenerate Man, tho' of the most piercing natural Wisdom, hath *seen*. 'Twas the same free, rich, infinite Grace, which provided CHRIST *for us*, that reveal'd Him *in us*. Ah, when *Nature* has done its utmost, to judge of *Salvation by Grace*; it will still be an impenetrable *Mystery* to the *natural Man*. *The Things of the Spirit of God*, of the Father's, and of the Son's *Love*, in the Provision and Exhibition of the SAVIOUR, and in the Application of *Salvation* to the saved *Ones*, which the Holy Ghost reveals, are *not receiv'd* by the natural Man; *because they are Foolishness unto Him; neither can he know them, because they are Spiritually discerned*. So great is the Power of Darkness, of the Soul-killing Influence of Sin and Satan, that it fills the Mind, and blinds the Understanding of the *natural Man*; and will hold him fast, as in a deep Dungeon, under the Bondage of the Law, without the least Beam of Gospel-Light; unless the omnipotent Power of Divine Grace, of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, *deliver him from the Power of Darkness*, and *translate him into the Kingdom of his dear Son*. Unless the Holy Ghost, sent from the Father and the Son, makes him a *spiritual Man*, creates a *Principle* of spiritual *Light* and *Life*, in his dead, dark *Heart*; and thereby makes him *meet* to be a *Partaker* of the *Inheritance* of the *Saints in Light*. Without the *Light of Grace*, without an inward gracious *Principle*

Principle of spiritual Light, which discerns and cleaves to the Light of Grace, to the *Doctrine* of Grace, in the outward Revelation; no Man shall ever see the *Light of Glory*. And nothing less than the omnipotent *Power* of the LORD alone, can create, or produce this Light in any one Soul.—What Reason then, have we to admire that Grace, that *saves* us thro' Faith, and gives us *Faith*, to receive Salvation alone by *Grace*! Oh, *Not of ourselves*, indeed, is Gospel-Faith; *it is the Gift of God*. A free Gift of his sovereign Grace, to those who were *ordained to eternal Life*. The LORD the Father, hath done more for us, in giving us *Faith*, to see the Glory of the LORD the Mediator, and the Excellency of GOD the SAVIOUR, in his Person and Work; than if He had given us *Millions of Worlds*! Oh what were they all worth, without, or in Comparison with his *Son*! *Without* the Knowledge of CHRIST, and of God in Him, whom to *know*, is *Life eternal*! Or in *Comparison* with that Knowledge!—Oh how evident is it, that the wise and learned World, with all their Learning and Wisdom, are awful Strangers to God, to the *Lord Jesus Christ*, and to the blessed Operations of the *Holy Ghost*! Alas! the *World's* wise and prudent Ones, know not the *Mystery of Faith*, nor the *Power of Godliness*! The *Kingdom of God*, of his Grace, is not *within them*. Hence they oppose and reproach, the Things which they understand not. Unto us, *Babes*, *it is given to know the Mysteries of the Kingdom*, but unto them that are without, even to the *Masters in Israel*, all these Things are in *Parables*. Even so, *Father*, for so it seemed good in thy Sight!—Let us adore the *Grace*, my Brother, that opened *our Eyes*; and pray that the *Eyes of the Blind*, of God's Chosen that are yet in Blindness, may see out of *Obscurity*; and that our Lord's Kingdom may come, over all the Opposition

sion that stands in its Way; and rise and shine thro'
 all the Mists and Fogs, which are rais'd to obscure its
 Glory. *Grace be with you!* I am,
Yours most affectionately in the slain LAMB,

LETTER XVII. To Mr. B.

Dear Sir,

THE *Sanctification* of a *Sinner*, by *Faith* in the
 SAVIOUR, is indeed a glorious *Gospel Mystery*.
 A *Mystery*, hid from the *natural Man*; and that, even
 by *spiritual Men*, is not well known, that is, practi-
 cally understood. And yet a *Mystery* it is, of the
 greatest Concernment, both with respect to the *Glory*
 of God, and the *Good* of his People. Without some
 Degree of real Acquaintance with it, a Man cannot be
 a *Christian*. And the more fully and sensibly he is ac-
 quainted therewith, the more *holy*, the more *happy*
Christian is he. And the more is the God of all Grace
 in Christ, glorify'd thereby. Oh, a *Life of Faith* on
 the *Son of God*, is the every *Day's Work* of a Believer.
 Without it, we shall soon be *Backsliders* in Heart and
 Ways.—And oh the infinite Love, the boundless
 Grace of God, that tho' we are *bent* to Backsliding from
 Him, and are every Day guilty of it more or less;
 He will still call us, *His People*, and according to his
 Promise, will *Heal our Backslidings*, and *love us freely*.
 Aye, *freely* indeed! or He had never loved us. Us,
 that by Nature, were a Sea of Vileness! A Hell of
 Iniquity! A Mass of black and horrid Contrariety to his
 infinite Purity! Us, that by Practice, were Transgressors
 from the Womb! And which is most amazing! Us,

that

that since the Display of his infinite, all-attracting Grace, in the Forgiveness of our Sins, in the Sanctification of our Nature, and in the Admission of our Persons, into all the Royalties and Privileges of the Sons of God; have nevertheless, slighted his Love, despis'd his Commandments, forsaken the Lord, and gone after other Lovers! And yet, oh yet, God *loveth us*! Us, who are guilty of such Ingratitude, that is not to be found among the Damned! And this notwithstanding He *knew* beforehand, how *treacherously* we should deal with Him, how rebellious, how abominable we should be! Oh this was *Free Love* indeed! Free in its Fixation; and free in its Continuation, or it would not have *held* towards us till *now*! We have *try'd it*, by innumerable Provocations, by most aggravated Transgressions: Every of our Sins, who are so greatly beloved, so highly favour'd, being of a deep Dye, an extensive Guilt, a bloody Colour. And yet, all Glory to infinite, unchanging *Love*, thro' infinite, all-atoning *Blood*! our JEHOVAH, *consumes not the Sons of Jacob*, but *loves them freely still*!—And tho' the Lord, to bring his backsliding Children to a Sense of their Backslidings, puts them in Mind of their Folly and Ingratitude; yet such is his infinite Grace, that He calls upon them to return unto Him. *For pass over the Isles of Chittim, and see; (saith the Lord) and send unto Kedar, and consider diligently, and see if there be such a Thing.* (Look, as if the Lord should say, O my People, whether there be such an *Instance* of Folly and Ingratitude, to be found in the *ungodly World*, as is to be seen in you!) *Hath a Nation changed their Gods, which yet are no Gods? But my People have changed their Glory (their God who is their Glory) for that which doth not profit.—For of old Time I have broken thy Yoke, and burst thy Bands, and thou saidst,*

I will

I will not transgress : When upon every high Hill, and under every green Tree thou wandrest, playing the Harlot, Jer. ii. 10, 11, 20. And yet, saith the Lord, Chap. iii. 1. They say, If a Man put away his Wife, and she go from him, and become another Man's, shall he return unto her again? Shall not that Land be greatly polluted? But thou hast played the Harlot with many Lovers ; yet return again unto Me, saith the LORD.—‘ Oh ‘ Free, Invincible, Everlasting Love! Overcome us, melt ‘ us, draw us! Then returning, under thy healing Influence, we will say repeatedly, after all our Heart, ‘ Lip, and Life-Backslidings, Behold, we come unto ‘ Thee, for Thou art the LORD our God.’—Oh my dear Brother, what an unspeakable Privilege is it, that such poor backsliding Children as we, have such a merciful Father, that will not cause his Anger to fall upon us, tho’ we have done as evil Things as we could! And how should this influence our Souls, into Childlike Ingenuity to our Heavenly Father? and Spouselike Loyalty to our Royal Bridegroom?—Surely it is our Wisdom as Believers, to come to the SAVIOUR daily, as being in ourselves, poor Sinners ; and to abide in Him continually by Faith, to receive of his Fulness, and Grace for Grace. Even all Supplies of Grace, for multiply’d Pardon, abundant Peace, full Joy, renewed Strength, and increasing Holiness. So shall we be filled with all the Fruits of Righteousness here, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the Glory and Praise of God. And shall have an abundant Entrance hereafter, ministered unto us into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. To whom be Glory and Dominion for ever and ever. Amen. Wishing all Prosperity : I remain, dear Sir,

*Your obliged Friend and Servant,
in our Glorious Lord,*

LETTER XVIII. To — —

Honoured Sir,

HOW glorious will be that State, when all the Saints shall *see Eye to Eye!* When we shall know, and love, and serve the Lord perfectly! When all our Death and Darkness, shall be swallowed up of Light and Life, full and eternal! That ineffable Bliss, hastens: Our *Lord comes quickly!* Let us by the Desires of our Souls, and in the Use of all appointed Means for our Growth in Grace, and Fruitfulness in good Works, press forward unto *that Day's Glory!* Yet a little while, and we shall *see Jesus as He is*, be completely *like Him*, and *for ever with him!* And who can tell what Joys, what Glories, the Sight of our *Beloved's Face*, will cast upon us, to an *endless Space!* O my dear and honoured Brother, is CHRIST yours, and is HE *mine?* Let us rejoice in our wondrous LOT! Our present and eternal ALL! And may the *Love of Christ*, constrain us to *live to Him*, who *died for us and rose again!*

My dear Lord hath been with me in my Affliction; hath rebuk'd the Disease as an Answer of Prayer, and is raising me up to do a little Work for Him, I trust, which I long'd to finish, before I go hence, and be no more. O pray for a *double Portion of the Holy Spirit* to be poured upon me, that my redeemed Life, may be *doubly the Lord's!*—Sweet has a Thought of *living to the Will of God*, been to me of late, and particularly in *Sufferings*: By an humble, patient, sweet Submission to, and a joyful Acquiescence with, the *Will of God*, to give him the *Glory due to his great Name*. When we yield to any unmeet Heaviness under Trials, methinks we rather *die*, than *live*, to the *Will of God* therein.—

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This,

This, this, of *Living to the Will of God*, is the daily *Work* of a *Christian*. To live to the Will of his *Promise* by *Faith*, to the Will of his *Precept* in *Love*, and thro' both to live to the Will of his *Providence*, whether joyous or grievous, by a complacent *Flow* into *God's good Pleasure*, and an humble, thankful *Adoration* of HIM, in all the various *Dispensations*, of his invariable Love towards us.—Delightfully *sweet* is this our *Work* in *itself*, and thus to our abundant Joy is *experienced*, when the Power of Christ rests upon us for its *Performance*: And ineffably *great* will be our *Reward*, when, of the freest *Grace*, we are called to enter into the *Rest*, the *Joy*, the *Glory* of our *great Lord*! It becomes us, Sir, to *mourn* that we can live *no more* to HIM, who liv'd and dy'd, who rose and lives for ever for *us*! That we who are *bought with a Price*, can glorify God *no more*, in our Body, and in our Spirit, which are *God's*! *This*, as the Case stands with *us*, (who being *sold under Sin*, oft experience, that when to *will* is *present* with us, *how to perform* we *find not*, this) is part of our *Work* and *Labour* of Love. Which our loving Lord, in the Infinity of his Grace, will call *our Kindness*, and in Love unknown, will accept and account as *our Service*, as if we had *done*, in some Sort, all that *Work* for HIM, which we fain *would* have done: And reward us he will, according to his *own Heart*, and every Way like his *Great SELF*! O what a glorious *Master* is *Jesus Christ*! None is *like Him* in *Grace*! May we *always abound in his Work*, to his present and endless *Praise*!—That *the Love of God our Father*, *the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ*, and *the Communion of the Holy Ghost* may be with you: is the hearty Desire of, Honoured Sir,

Your most obliged Humble Servant,

L E T T E R XIX. To Mrs. H.

My very Dear Sister in Christ,

AS the Lord hath fixed the *Bounds of our Habitation*, and the *Times before appointed*; we may be well assured, that for us his dear Children, He hath done all Things in relation thereto, so *well*, that nothing could have been *better* than it is. His *Will*, in this Regard, being founded upon his *Counsel*, and his abounding *Wisdom and Prudence*, towards us, being according to the *exceeding Riches of his Grace*. Whence we should be induced to give *Glory*, to our all-wise, and all-gracious GOD. And as the Places and Times of our Abode were appointed; so likewise, our *Work* therein ordained. Our Work for God and his People, in relation to the Building, Beauty and Glory of the *Church, the City of the great King*. Thus God's People of old, *repaired the Wall of Jerusalem, every one over-against his House*, Neh. iii. 28. And thus we in particular, are especially call'd in, Love to the *House of our God*, and for our *Brethren, our Companions Sakes*, to seek the *Good of Jerusalem, the Prosperity of Sion*, by Faith and Prayer, in the Places where *we live*, or *over-against the Houses where our Lot is cast*. And as the Lord has chosen our Work for us, and the Places of our Residence in order to it; *we should chuse the latter, as subservient to the former*.—Glad should I have been, my dear Sister, if your Lot had been cast *here*; but as Providence at present fixes your *Abode* in the Place where you *reside*; believe that *this* is most for *God's Glory and your Advantage*. Such is the infinite Condescension of your Lord's Grace, that he will say, He hath *Need of you*, and of your Faith and Pray-

er, for the Advancement of his Cause and Interest, the Success of his Gospel, and the Good of his People in *N——n*. And you shall receive your *own Reward*, according to your *own Labour*, both in the present and future World. You serve a *Master*, that is an *infinite Lover*! Whose *Grace* is boundless, changeless, endless! And who delights to shew its *exceeding Riches*, in the Fulness of your Time-Joy, and in the Greatness of your eternal Glory! Wherefore, go on to serve him to the utmost; and with the Enjoyment of HIM, you shall be richly blest. For *His Servants shall eat*, when others are *hungry*; *His Servants shall drink*, when others are *thirsty*; *His Servants shall sing for Joy of Heart*, when others *howl for Vexation of Spirit*.

I beg the Help of your Prayers, for the Advancement of our Redeemer's Interest in this Place. I hope the Lord will visit us with his Salvation, to revive his Work in the Midst of the Years of Trial, that this little *Tribe* be not cut off in *Israel*. It is now a Time of Distress, with most of the Churches of Christ, by the sad, felt Withdraw of Divine Influence. But at *Evening-Time*, it shall be light. When our Hope is cut off, as it were, and Death and Darkness feared: Then is the *Lord's Time* to work Salvation, and to arise upon us with the *Light of Life*, to our joyful Surprise, and his endless Praise. How good is it then, to wait for HIM, who waiteth to be gracious? For the *Needy shan't be alway forgotten*, nor the *Expectation of the Poor, perish for ever*. And since the LORD is a *Refuge* for the *Oppressed*, a *Refuge in Times of Trouble*: Let us that *know his Name*, put our *Trust in Him*. Let us do it for his Honour and Pleasure, and for our Salvation and Glory. For, *The LORD taketh Pleasure in them that fear him, in them that hope in his Mercy*. And they that *know his Name*, by Way of *Trust*, as
being

being honour'd by them, He will *deliver and honour*, with *long Life* will He *satisfy* them, and *shew* them his *Salvation*.—*Great Grace be with you!* With affectionate Esteem, I am, my dear Sister,

Yours in the Lord for ever,

L E T T E R XX. To — —

Reverend and dear Sir,

OUR glorious Lord, is a glorious *Lover*! A matchless *Lover*! And while for ourselves we know, his Knowledge-passing *Love*; O how sweetly, how strongly doth it *constrain* us, to love Him, in *keeping his Commandments*! And this Command of his in particular, “That we love one another, (in our little Measure) as He in his (immeasurable Grace) hath loved us!” Gospel Obedience, the Obedience of Faith and Love, to the excellent and endearing Laws, of the Lord our Saviour-King, has its *Reward* in *Itself*. Our very Work, is our Wages: Or, our Employment, Enjoyment. And yet, in the Exuberance of our *Lord's Grace*, there is a *Reward of Glory* to come, which in Greatness doth far *surpass*, all our present *Thought*! How *blessed* then, are those happy Souls, who, *stedfast, unmoveable, are always abounding in the Work of the Lord*: Forasmuch as *their Labour is not in vain in the Lord*! This, Sir, is a Bliss common to all the *Saints*, in the Work allotted them in common as *such*.

But O what superior *Work*, or rather, what a superior *Kind* of the Lord's Work, is the *Ministry of the Gospel*! And what peculiar *Rewards*, are Gospel *Ministers*

sters blest with, in the present and future *State* ! How great is the Reward of their present *Work* ! How great the Grace, that cast it on them as a *Service of Gift* ! How great is the Reward of its present *Fruit*, in the Conversion of Sinners, and Edification of Saints : To the Glory of God by Christ, the Salvation of Souls, and their own unspeakable Joy ! And how great will be the Reward of those that *turn many to Righteousness*, in the *Day of Christ* ! They *shall shine* (in Glory) *as the Stars for ever and ever* !—And is this, Honour'd Sir, your delightful Work, your happy Lot : How greatly hath the Lord loved you ! Of the Grace of Christ, towards a Minister of his, well may Men and Angels say, *Behold how HE loved him* !—I wish you abundant Joy, Sir, in feeding, and guiding the *Flock of God*, which He hath purchased with his own Blood ; and a weighty *Crown of Glory*, when the chief Shepherd shall appear : And humbly request your Prayers for,

Reverend Sir,

Your most obliged humble Servant,

L E T T E R XXI. To Mr. F.

Dear Sir,

I AM glad that the rich, free, distinguishing Grace of GOD to his Own, and towards yourself, as you hope you are one of that happy Number, affects your Heart, humbles you in the Dust before the Lord, and raiseth your Wonder and Praise. *Free Grace, reigning thro' Righteousness, unto eternal Life, by Jesus Christ our Lord* ; is a glorious *Theme*, the Song of Saints and Angels, in the upper and lower *Worlds*, and will sweetly

ly strike our Strings, unto increasing Melody, thro' the endless Ages of a blest *Eternity*. O for an increasing Display of its immense Glory in the present *Time*! That under the sweet Constraints of distinguishing, unchangeable, eternal Grace, we may be dedicated unto God, our Three-One God, in *all Manner of holy Conversation*!

It is indeed, Sir, the *last Time*, the Signs of our *Lord's Coming* are upon us. Happy will it be for those Servants of his, who shall be found *watching*. Awful Warnings of impending Judgments, have been given to this God-provoking Nation, and the Two late Shocks of *Earthquakes* felt in *London*, are eminently such. By them the Lord's Voice is to the City, "Repent, or " I will come unto thee quickly : And ease me of mine " Adversaries, and avenge me of mine Enemies." But O, who hears it! How few tremble at it! How many, what Multitudes, are secure, and go on still in their Iniquity! Tho' the *Lord's Hand is lifted up*, the *Wicked* will not see. But he *shall see* : (saith the Prophet) and see shortly, to his everlasting Destruction ; if he will not see speedily, to a thorough Reformation, to a saving Turn unto God by Christ. Who as the great Saviour, is the only hiding Place for a poor Sinner, where he may be safe, from both natural, and moral Storms : When God ariseth out of his Place, to shake terribly the Earth, and to shake the Impenitent and Unbelieving down to Hell.

As to yourself, Sir, having fled unto Christ for Refuge from the Wrath to come, be not afraid with a dismaying Fear, of God's awful Judgments in the present Time. But, *Seek Righteousness, seek Meekness ; it may be you may be hid in the Day of the Lord's Anger*. His Voice to his Own is, *Come, my People, enter thou into thy Chambers, and shut thy Doors about thee : Hide thyself*

thyselves as it were for a little Moment, until the Indignation is overpast. And happy, thrice happy are they, that hide themselves in *Christ*, and under the Shadow of *Jehovah's Wings*; they shall be safely preserved by *Grace* from all penal Storms, amidst the greatest Shakings, and Overturnings in *Nature*. God hath remarkable Deliverances in Store for them, that sigh and mourn, for all the *Abominations* in the midst of them, and that are committed by the Ungodly, where they dwell: When *the Earth* (as was foretold) *shall reel to and fro like a Drunkard, and be moved exceedingly, the Transgression thereof* (of those that dwell therein), being heavy upon it. And if any of the Lord's People should fall in a common Calamity; that sore Judgment which will sink the Wicked into Damnation, shall raise a Saint to complete Salvation, and be to him, the very *Inlet* unto Joy and Bliss, ineffable and eternal! Therefore come what will, to those that are in *Christ*, Say ye to the *Righteous*, that it shall be well with him.

You desire my Thoughts, Sir, “Whether the Day “ of Grace may be past, with some poor Souls, before “ their Life is at an End.” Please to take them thus:

The Day of Grace, I humbly think, may be considered in a Three-fold Respect. As 1. *The Day of the Gospel*. 2. *The Day of more than ordinary Strivings of the Holy Spirit with Men, in common Convictions*. And 3. *The Day of Christ's Power, the Power of his special Grace, on the Hearts of his People*.

First. *The Day of the Gospel* may be stiled *The Day of Grace*. In that it is in itself glad Tidings, the Promulgation of the Grace of God, thro' Jesus Christ, to Sinners indefinitely: Or, to the very Chief of Sinners, without Exception of this or that Man; while its general Call is to all, *Come, for all Things are now ready; viz.* God has provided a full and free Salvation for per-

rishing

fishings Sinners, thro' the crucify'd Saviour, and call's the very Chief of them to *Faith in Christ*, and *Repentance toward God*, to come in and partake of Gospel-Provisions, to their everlasting Salvation.

The Day of Grace, in this Respect, may be over with some Souls, before their Life is at an End. As is evident by the Lord's Dealing with the unbelieving *Jews*: The Gospel was taken from them, and sent to the *Gentiles*, Act. xiii. 46. And whoever among the *Gentiles*, obey not the Gospel, but make Excuses, like the *Jews*, have just Cause to fear, lest the Master of the House, the Lord of his Church, being *angry*, should resolve concerning them, That they *shall not taste of his Supper*, Luk. xiv. 24. That the Gospel shall be taken from *them*, or they from *it*. And this is sometimes done, by God's removing the Gospel from the *Place* where such Persons live, or by his removing *them* to another Place, where the Light of the Gospel doth not shine. And if the Gospel is not taken from the Place where such Persons live, nor they from it, God in Judgment, may justly give up those that *despise the Gospel*, that chuse *present*, before *eternal Things*, to an awful Neglect of this *great Salvation*. So that they may have no Mind to *attend* the Gospel, but while the *Light* shines upon *others*, be content *themselves*, to sit in *Darkness*, and in the *Shadow of Death*.

Secondly. The Day of Grace, may be taken for the Day of more than ordinary *Strivings* of the *Holy Spirit* with *Men*, in common *Convictions*. As, doubtless, the Spirit of Christ, in the Ministry of *Noah*, strove with the *old World*. And these Strivings of the Spirit, proceed from the Goodness of God, and natively tend to lead Men to Repentance, that they fall not into Perdition.

But when these are rejected, God is provoked, and says of irreclaimable Sinners now, as he said of those before the Flood, *My Spirit shall not always strive with Man*, Gen. vi. 3. There are Times when Sinners under the Gospel, have more than ordinary Convictions of Sin, and Impressions upon their Hearts to seek God : And when these are not attended to, but slighted and despised ; God may give up such poor Souls to the Hardness of their Hearts, and the Blindness of their Mind, and utterly withdraw from them those Influences of the Holy Spirit, with which before they were favoured. Thus we are told of some, who being *past Feeling, have given themselves over to Lasciviousness, to work all Uncleanliness with Greediness*, Eph. iv. 19. It doubtless becomes not us to say, who *bath*, or who hath *not*, provoked God so far, as utterly to withdraw the Influence of his Holy Spirit from them. Because we don't know, how far some Souls may be left to sin away Convictions, and yet afterwards be recovered. But if strong Convictions and Impressions, that are but of a common Kind, (and such are all those, that don't shew the Soul the Plague of its own Heart, unbottom it from Self-Righteousness, and allure it unto Jesus, as a complete Saviour, for its own Salvation) ; if these are sinned away, and a Person can work Wickedness without Remorse ; doubtless such a Man, is in a very dangerous Case.—And perhaps the Day of Grace, in both these Respects, may be included in what our Lord said to *Jerusalem*, *If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy Day the Things which belong to thy Peace ! but now they are hid from thine Eyes*, Luk. xix. 42.—But the Day of Grace may respect,

Thirdly. The Day of Christ's Power, the Power of his special Grace, on the Hearts of his People.

And

And this *can't* be over, but shall certainly be experienced by every one of the Lord's People, *before* their Life is ended. This being the Covenant Promise of the Father, unto Christ his Son, *Thy People shall be willing in the Day of thy Power*, Pl. cx. 3. This is a Day of Grace *indeed* ! The Day of Grace in other Respects, may be *resisted*, may be *over* ; but this Day of Grace, is a Day of *Power*, of efficacious, irresistible *Love-Power*, that effectually *takes the Heart*, and brings all adverse Power into *Captivity*, unto the *Obedience of Jesus Christ*. *Thy People*, — saith the Father, to the Son, *i. e.* those whom I have lov'd and chose of old unto *eternal Life*, and given to *Thee*, to be *redeemed* from all Misery, unto all Glory ; they *shall be willing*. — Almighty Love, Almighty Power engages for it. They shall be *willing*. — Not saved against their *Will* ; but made *willing* to be saved in *God's Way*. By his Free Grace, without the Deeds of the Law, thro' the Blood and Righteousness of Jesus Christ ; and to be saved unto Holiness here, as well as unto Happiness hereafter. And made willing they are, not by any *Force* put upon their Will, contrary to its *Inclination* ; but by a most strong, and sweet *Allurement*, whereby the Will moves *freely*, in chusing that *supremely*, which the Understanding, from a supernatural Light shining upon it, sees *clearly*, to be the *greatest, chiefest Good*. And when thus made willing, so far as their Will is *renewed*, they are willing in the highest Degree ; *Willingness*, in the Abstract, *Willingnesses*, in the Plural. And for their being thus willing, there is a *Day*, a set Time prefixed, that was Foreappointed in God's eternal Purpose. And that Day *shall* come, and *when* come, *Power* comes along with it ; Satan-binding, Sin-killing, Soul-quickning, Soul-saving *Power*. The Lord, its infinite Lover, passeth by, sees it polluted in

its *own Blood*, cast out into the *open Field*, a miserable, wretched, helpless Creature, and by his All-gracious, and All-efficacious Voice, says unto it, *Live*. Yea, when it is in its *Blood*, He saith unto it, *Live*. By which He communicates, and declares, *Life spiritual*, that shall by the same Almighty Power and Grace, be maintain'd and increased, unto *Life eternal*. And to shew the Source of this wondrous Change, He adds, *And thy Time*, this Day of Grace to thee, was the *Time of Love*. Of free, infinite, all-conquering, unchangeable and eternal *Love*! Ezek. xvi. 6, 8.

Thus, Sir, in this Three-fold Respect, I humbly think, the Day of Grace may be taken. And you will easily see, that tho' the Day of Grace, in the two former Senses, is sufficient to leave those who perish from under it, *without Excuse*; yet it is the Day of Grace in the latter Sense only, that is or can be, the Day of *Salvation-Power*, unto any *one Soul*; and that this Day of Grace, shall certainly be so unto *every Soul*, that was ordained unto *eternal Life*, wherein he shall be effectually called by *special Grace*, unto that *immortal Glory*.—From the two first, we may learn,

I. That it is the great Duty of all Men under the Gospel, to *comply* with the *Calls of it*. And that if they *neglect* and *reject* that great Salvation which the Gospel proclaims, even while it is called *To-day*, God may take the Gospel from them, or they from it, before they are *aware*, and deprive them of those Opportunities which they have slighted, which had a native Tendency to their Salvation, and which, despised, will aggravate their Damnation, when our Lord shall be revealed from Heaven with his mighty Angels, in flaming Fire, taking Vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting Destruction, from the Presence

sence of the Lord, and from the Glory of his Power, 2 Thes. i. 7, 8, 9.

2. That every Soul ought to *beware* of striving against those Convictions and Impressions, which *tend* to their Reformation and Salvation. Inasmuch as they are the *Voice of God*, which ought to be *obey'd*, and which to rebel *against*, is a very great *Sin*; and will greatly increase their *Torment*, if God should withdraw from them the Influence of his Spirit, account them such that have *judged themselves unworthy of everlasting Life*, and leave them to perish in eternal Death, *Act. xiii. 46.*—From the Day of Grace in the last Sense we may learn,

1. That those who feel *Convictions*, should rejoice in Hope, that they may end in a saving *Conversion*. And let them know, that the Day of Grace is not *past* with *any one*, that feels the gracious *Power of God* working upon his *Heart*. And tho' the Soul may have sinned away Convictions Time after Time, and increas'd its Hardness of Heart and Blindness of Mind; yet *now, now*, if it has a *Desire* to return unto God by Christ, the Door of Mercy is *open*; and *To-day*, after *so long a Time*, the Lord calls it as a perishing *Sinner*, to flee to *JESUS*, the great Saviour, as the only Refuge and Hope set before it in the Gospel. And not a Soul that *comes in* at the Gospel-Call, will our Lord *cast out*, but *receive him to the Glory of God*, to save him from endless Death, unto eternal Life, *Joh. vi. 37.*

2. That as there is such a Day of Grace, that is and shall be a Day of *Salvation-Power*, unto all the Lord's People; This may encourage all those, who have a painful Feeling within themselves, of *much Opposition* to their *own Salvation*. Not a Soul that is willing to be sav'd alone by God's Free Grace, thro' *JESUS CHRIST*, from all Sin and Misery, unto all Holiness and Glory; but is one of the *Lord's People*; but hath felt the *Day* of

of his *Power* already upon its *Heart*. And that same omnipotent Grace, which hath *begun* its new Life, will *maintain* and *increase* it unto Life eternal; will *vanquish* all Opposition, and *complete* its Salvation. The Lord its *Saviour*, will be its *King*, to save it from *Destruction*, and with an *everlasting Salvation*. Mountains of Opposition, before our *Zerubbabel*, shall become a *Plain*: His Hands which have laid the *Foundation*, even his Hands shall *finish* it, and He shall bring forth the *Head-Stone*, thereof with Shoutings, crying, *Grace, Grace* unto it! *Zeck. iv. 7.* And hence,

3. Let those who have been made willing in the Day of Christ's Power, learn to *admire* and *praise*, the rich, free, distinguishing *Grace of God* unto *them*. O how often have *we*, the *Saved of the Lord*, slighted the Calls of the Gospel, made Excuses, and went our Way! Strove against Convictions, and repeated our Transgressions! And how justly might the Lord have said concerning us, as he hath done, and will do concerning others, *Because I have called, and ye refused, I have stretched out my Hand, and no Man regarded: But ye have set at Nought all my Counsel, and would none of my Reproof: I also will laugh at your Calamity, and mock when your Fear cometh, Prov. i. 24, &c.* And yet, O yet, would not the Lord take us at our *Word*, and appoint us unto that *Wrath*, which our *Sins* had deserved; but *compel* us to *come in*, that *his House* might be *filled*! *Compel* us to come in to *Christ*, unto our eternal Life by *JESUS*! What shall we say of, what shall we render *to*, this discriminating Grace, this infinite Patience, this All overflowing Mercy, and All overcoming Kindness! In *all Manner of holy Conversation and Godliness*, let us, as the Lord's peculiar People, saved by Grace, in the Day of his Power, *shew forth the Praises of Him who hath called us out of Darknes, into his*

his marvellous Light! 1 Pet. ii. 9. — *The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your Spirit!* In HIM, I am, dear Sir,

Your sincere Friend and Servant,

LETTER XXII. To — —

My very dear Brother,

IF this is a false Report; beware of every Thing that may give any Occasion of Suspicion or Reflection. But if it be true; O *where are you!* What are you doing! Have you forgotten that vast Obligation which the Love of Christ, that passeth Knowledge, lays you under, to *live* unto HIM, who *died for you*, and *rose again*? Have you forgot the great Work of your Calling, which is, to be an *Holy Man* unto the LORD, or *dedicate* unto HIM, in *all Manner of holy Conversation and Godliness*? Are you not dearly bought with the *Redeemer's Blood*? Bought unto HIM? And will you deny the LORD of his *Right*? Of your little *Self*, who gave his great *SELF* for you! Be ashamed of such Injustice, of such Ingratitude. Let 'em not be seen in, be heard of *you*, the *Redeemed* of the LORD! O why do you thus forget HIM, who sav'd your *Soul* from the *lowest Hell*! — *Forget him*, did I say? That's not all, you *wound*, you *pierce him*. Was it not enough, that the Heart and Soul of Christ, were pierced once for you, when his own *Self* bare your *Sins*, in his own *Body on the Tree*; but will you *pierce him still*! Will you do that repeatedly and delightfully, under the Sorrows of which He groaned inexpressibly! O think, when you take an intoxicating Cup into your Hand with Pleasure, '*This, this was it*, that fill'd my Lord's
' *bitter*

• bitter Cup, that Cup of *Wrath*, which made his *Soul*
 • exceeding sorrowful, even unto *Death*! Shall I drink
 • that with Pleasure, which was to HIM so exceeding
 • bitter! Shall I seek any Life of Delight in *Sin*, in
 • that *Sin*, which caus'd his agonizing Grief, and ac-
 • cursed *Death*! Shall I thus, open all his Wounds!
 • And yield to that abominable *Sin*, even in the Sight
 • of my Lord, (whose Eye is ever upon me) which
 • actually caus'd, and instantly brings to his Mind,
 • His exquisite *Sufferings*! Is any *Pleasure* I can now
 • take in *Sin*, worth that *Grief* and *Displeasure*, which I
 • shall hereby give to my Lord *afresh*! Yea, think,
 • How shall I do that *abominable Thing* which my Lord
 • *hateth*, and thus lay his Honour in the *Dust*! De-
 • throne HIM, who dy'd to crown me! How shall I
 • thus *stumble* and *grieve the Saints*, and *harden Sinners*
 • in their Wickedness! And how shall I thus, by *Sin-*
 • *ing against CHRIST*, *wrong my own Soul*! Rob it of
 • that Life and Joy, which is to be had in Commu-
 • nion with God, and Conformity to Him *here*, and
 • of those additional Glories, which of the freest Grace,
 • shall be the Reward of good Works *hereafter*! —
 Thus, my dear Brother, thus think and reason with
 yourself, whenever tempted to sin against the Lord.

And examine how it is with you, after you have
 fallen into Sin. Do you look upon it as a *little, light*
Thing, and make *Excuses* for it? Are you but little
concerned, but little *pained* about it? And consequently,
 but little *humbled* before God for it? — If it's thus with
 you, your *Soul* is in a *pitiable Case*. God is withdrawn
 from your Spirit, you have lost your first Love, and
 your spiritual Life is under an awful Decay. And *a-*
larmed you had need be, and stirred up to Duty *in-*
stantly, lest you be *hardned* thro' the Deceitfulness
 of Sin *suddenly*. For tho' Sin hardens insensibly,
 by

by increasing Degrees, yet every Degree of Sin, hardens suddenly, and prepares the Heart for greater Sin, and greater Hardness.—And *dreadful* will the Consequents be, of *bold Sinning*, with *faint Concern*, unto every one who has *tasted* that the *Lord is gracious*. Such Backsliders are in Danger of provoking the Lord to give them up to the Power of Sin and Satan, to the Hidings of his Face, and the Rebukes of his Providence, to Soul-Darkness in this World, and to the Loss of that Praise, and Honour, and Glory, which otherwise they would have had in the World to come : And thus to cast them among the Number of those who *shall be saved*, so as by *Fire* : That lose all their Works, the Reward of an holy Life, which others shall receive in the Day of Christ.

But if the former is not your Case : If after any Fall into Sin, your Conscience being yet *tender*, you are *deeply pierced* with a Sense of *God's Dishonour* thereby, and of your great *Provocation*, and vile *Ingratitude* therein : If on Account thereof you are *deeply humbled* before the *Lord*, and *He*, in the Infinity of his Grace, speaks *Peace* to your troubled Heart, and thereby melts you into *Gospel-Mourning* for Sin, and raiseth in you holy *Resolutions* against it ; if this is your Case : There is *Hope of Deliverance*, that God will *break your Bands*, and give you the *Victory* over that *Sin*, which now usurps with *Tyranny*. And for this Salvation, seek most earnestly.—And beware, that *after Peace* spoken, you *turn not again unto Folly*. For Sins of this Kind, are of the *deepest Dye*, of exceeding great *Guilt* : They dishonour *God greatly*, and wound the *Soul deeply*.—Wherefore *be sober*, *be vigilant*, watch against Temptations to Sin, and lift up your Heart to God for Strength to stand in the evil Day ; *for your Adversary the Devil goeth about like a roaring Lion, seeking whom*

he may devour. — That the God of Peace may bruise Satan under your Feet shortly, sanctify you wholly, preserve you blameless, and present you faultless, before the Presence of his Glory with exceeding Joy: is the hearty Desire and Prayer of, my dear Brother,

Yours most affectionately,

LETTER XXIII. To — —

My dear Brother,

HEALTH of Soul, is the greatest Blessing, Soul-Prosperity, the richest Mercy. *Near to God, and beneath his Smiles, we live; but far from him, and frown'd away from his manifestative Favour, we die.* Decay in the vigorous Exercises of our Graces, in our Fruitfulness and Usefulness, to God's Dishonour, and our own and others Grief. How is it with you, my dear Brother, are you blest with Fellowship with God, and thence enabled to walk in the Light, as He is in the Light, to purify yourself, even as Christ is pure? Or are you left to the Power of Sin, and under the awful Rebuke of Distance from God? *God and Sin, Light and Darknefs, Christ, and Belial, can have no Fellowship with each other.* If Sin is indulged, God is displeased, his Holy Spirit is grieved, the Soul is wounded, and forsaken in Part and for a Time of its best Friend, and given up into the Hand of its Enemies. *O, when Israel chose new Gods, then War was in the Gates.* And to aggravate the Sin and Folly of God's People in their own Sight, the Lord saith, *Pass over to the Isles of Chittim, and see; and send unto Kedar, and consider diligently, and see if there be such a Thing. Hath a Nation changed their Gods,*
which

which yet are no Gods ? But my People have changed their Glory, for that which doth not profit, Jer. ii. 10, 11. GOD is the Glory of his People ; and yet so foolish are his backsliding Children, that they change their Glory, for that which doth not profit. “ Do ye get any Thing, as if the Lord should say, by departing from Me ? ” O no ; so far are we from gaining by Sin, that by every Act of it, we sustain the greatest Loss. We change our Glory, for that which is inglorious, yea, for that which is most vile and Abominable, and is and ought to be the Matter of our Shame. And hereby we become guilty of these two Evils, of forsaking the LORD, the Fountain of living Waters, and of hewing to ourselves Cisterns, broken Cisterns, that can hold no Water. Upon which the Lord saith, Be astonished, O ye Heavens, at this, Ver. 12, 13. And thus, from the Insensibility of his backsliding People, He addresseth the inanimate Creatures, Hear, O Heavens, and give Ear, O Earth : for the LORD hath spoken, I have nourished and bro’t up Children, and they have rebelled against me, Isa. i. 2. And to shew their prodigious Stupidity, He adds, The Ox knoweth his Owner, and the Ass his Master’s Crib : but Israel doth not know, my People doth not consider, Ver. 3. And to argue his People out of their base Ingratitude, He saith, Have I been a Wilderiness to Israel ? a Land of Darknes ? Wherefore say my People, We are Lords, we will come no more unto thee ? Can a Maid forget her Ornaments, or a Bride her Attire ? Yet my People have forgotten ME Days without Number, Jer. ii. 31, 32. There is certainly no such Thing as Stupidity in the sensitive Creatures, when compar’d with that which is to be found in Believers, when departing from the Lord, we set up for ourselves : Our own Will, instead of God’s, for our Law, and the Gratification of our sinful Inclinations,

instead of *walking worthy of God*, in all holy Confor-
 mity and filial Duty, *unto all Pleasing*. And as to In-
 gratitude, there is no such Thing to be found among
 the *rational Creatures*, towards their *Fellow-Creatures*,
 as appears in the *Children of God*, when *Jeshurun*, wax-
 en fat, *kicketh*! When *nourished* by infinite Kindness,
 and indulg'd as the *Favourites of Heaven*, we despise
 the *Commandments of the Lord*, and rise up in Rebellion
 against *Him*, as if we were his *Enemies*! Nor can
 there be any such Ingratitude in the rational Creatures,
 towards *God their Creator*, who are Partakers of his
tender Mercies in a Way of *common Bounty*, and yet are
regardless of Duty; as is to be seen in *Believers*, when
 tho' the Objects of God's *special Favour*, we cast it be-
 hind our *Backs*, and by Sin trample it under our *Feet*,
 as if it was not worth a *Thought*! As if the *Mercies of*
God, his special, Soul-saving *Mercy*, was not Motive
 sufficient to filial *Duty*, to engage us to offer up our-
 selves as a *living Sacrifice* to his *Glory*, *holy and accept-*
able by *Jesus Christ*! O my dear Brother, *our Sins* are
 of a crimson, and scarlet *Dye*. *We can't sin at a cheap*
Rate. Every of *our Sins*, that *believe in Jesus*, that
 are under *Forgiving-Love*, are of a more aggravated
Guilt by far, than the Sins of those, who *do not know*
the Lord. And deeper far, they pierc'd our dear, dy-
 ing *JESUS*, than those we were guilty of, before we were
called out of Darkness, into God's marvellous Light. —
 It is well for us, who are the chief of Sinners, that
 there is an Infinity of Merit in the *Blood of the Son of*
God! Else, it could not *cleanse us from all Sin*! But,
 Glory be to God, Salvation by Grace, thro' the Blood
 of Christ, is infinitely *full and free*! — But, let us not
sin, because *Grace abounds*. If there is any Spark of
 Ingenuity in our Souls, let us that *love the Lord*, *bate*
 this *Evil*, and with the utmost Abhorrence of it say,
 God

God forbid! Let the Grace of God which bringeth Salvation, teach us, that denying Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present World. — I commit you as one of Christ's Sheep, loved, and bought with his Blood, to his tender Care, and saving Power, as the LORD our great, and good Shepherd: And am,

Yours very affectionately,

L E T T E R XXIV. To — —

My very dear Brother,

I AM distressed to hear of the lamentable State of your dear Soul. — Is the Grief you cause to your dear Brethren, and especially to your dear and honoured Pastor, whose tender Heart is ready to break with your Backslidings; *Nothing* unto you? Is the Reproach you bring to the Name, Ways and People of God; a *light Thing* with you? Is the Displeasure and Grief you give to the Lord that loveth you; unworthy of your Notice? What, redeemed; and not account yourself the Redeemer's Right! Bought with a Price; and not glorify God with your Body and with your Spirit, which are God's! Have you forgotten the Obligations which boundless Love, reigning Grace, and pardoning Mercy lay you under? Have you forgotten your own Engagements to be the Lord's? What hath Christ done to you, my Brother, that you dislike your Master, and forsake his Service? Is Satan the best Master, and Sin the best Work, in your Esteem? What, make a Captain to return to Egypt! What Fruit had you in those Things, whereof you was once ashamed? In those Evils, where-

of

of you ought now to be *ashamed*? Is not the *End* of those Things, *Death*? Yes, my Brother, as truly as the *Lord liveth*, the Word is gone out of his Mouth in Faithfulness, it shall not return void: *If ye live after the Flesh, ye shall die.* The Life of your Graces, the Life of your Glory, must and will go, by the Satisfaction of your Lust. Not the least *Sin* you commit, but will affect your *spiritual Life*, and detract from your *Crown of Life*. Will you let *another* take your *Crown*? No, rather, *So run, that you may obtain.* *The Lord is at Hand.* *The Judge standeth before the Door.* Know you not, that if any Servant of Christ, becomes so *evil*, as to say in his Heart, *My Lord delayeth his Coming, and to eat and drink with the Drunken: The Lord of that Servant will come at an Hour when he looketh not for him, and will appoint him his Portion with the Unbelievers?* Your Time is just gone; a vast *Eternity* hastens! Would you wish to enter the dark *Valley of the Shadow of Death*, with all that Darkness of *Guilt*, which such open Transgressions must bring upon your Conscience, if you are not awfully *hardned* thro' the *Deceitfulness of Sin*? If you don't see Sin in its Vileness and Blackness *now*, you will see it in its horrid Colours, in its Guilt and Aggravations, when you come to lie upon a *dying Bed*.

“ Death puts on Things another Face,

“ Than we in Life do see :

“ Sin, Satan, Hell, Heaven, Life and Grace,

“ Then great and weighty be.”

My dear Brother, if you go on in Sin, you may justly be left under the Hidings of God's Face, the Terrors of Conscience, and the fierce Assaults of the Enemy of Souls, so that you may endure a Kind of *Hell* in your *Spirit*; and not know but your *Portion* may be
with

with *Unbelievers*, in the *eternal World*, when you are just entering upon an *endless State*.—For the Lord's Sake then, for his People's Sake, and for your Soul's Sake, *awake out of Sleep*, and venture not a *Step further*, in the *Paths of the Destroyer*. Let me intreat you without Delay, or Hindrance by any Business whatsoever, to set apart a Day of solemn Fasting and Prayer, to humble yourself before God for your Transgressions, and to intreat his forgiving Mercy and renewing Grace, for your speedy Restoration. Lest the Lord should say of you, as of his People of old, *Israel would none of ME: So I gave them up to their own Heart's Lust, and they walked in their own Counsels*. Which brings present Misery, inexpressible. And the Loss of that Praise, Honour and Glory, which otherwise you should receive in Life eternal.—O that the Father of Mercies, the God of Compassions, would *pluck you as a Brand out of the Burning!* I commit you to his *tender Mercy*: and am, with great Concern,

Yours most affectionately,

L E T T E R XXV. To — —

My very dear Brother,

I Received your last kind Letter with great Joy, to hear of the Lord's Loving-kindness in *restoring* your dear Soul. *Who is a God like unto HIM, that pardoneth Iniquity, and passeth by the Transgression of the Remnant of his Heritage! He retaineth not his Anger for ever, because he delighteth in Mercy. He will turn again, he will have Compassion, he will subdue our Iniquities, and cast all our Sins into the Depths of the Sea.* O who would

would not *love* and *fear him* ! How sad is it, that *we* the Redeemed, the Saved, the Restored of the LORD, should *sin* against him ! And yet thus, wretched *we*, the Lord's People, are *bent to Backsliding from him* ! Are you *redeemed*, Brother, *bought with a Price* ? *Glorify God in your Body, and in your Spirit, which are his*. Are you *saved* ? Let the *Love* of your Saviour, constrain you to *live unto HIM who died for you, and rose again*. Are you *restored* ? Dread *returning again unto Folly*. Hath God the LORD *shewed you Light* ? Bind the *Sacrifice* (your whole Spirit, Soul and Body) with *Cords* (of his infinite Kindness) to the *Horns of the Altar* : To the efficacious *Power of Christ's Mediation* ; who presents us, and all our Services, acceptable to God, to his and our Father. Commit the Keeping of your Soul daily into Christ's Hands. He would have his Children trust him with their Time-Preservation, as well as with their eternal Salvation. We little think what we *lose* for want of abiding by *Faith* in our dear *Lord Jesus*, in his immense Fulness, which only can be a sufficient Supply, for our extensive Emptiness. We, alas, too often go into a World of Snares, with a Sort of *Self-Dependence*, as if our inherent Grace, was sufficient to keep us ; and so our Feet are caught in an evil Net, before we are aware. Whereas, if distrusting our own Ability to keep ourselves, we went out trusting in the LORD our *Strength* ; we should be *safe*, by him directed, and upheld. — We have now, my dear Brother, but a little, a very little *Time* left, to glorify God in upon the Earth. O let us watch and pray, that it may be *all* devoted to his Honour. What can be too much, what enough, to do or suffer, for the Praise of that Grace which hath saved us ! *The Love of God our Father, the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Communion of the Holy Ghost* ; call for
our

our *whole Selves* continually, as a holy, living *Sacrifice*, to be offered up to the *LORD's Glory*. But O how little *do* we, *can* we *pay*, of that Debt of Love we *owe* ! Let us cast up our Accounts daily, reflect upon our every Day's Conduct ; confess and bewail our Deficiencies, and fleeing for Pardon to infinite Grace, thro' all-atoning Blood, let us intreat restoring, strengthning, Soul-enriching Mercies. That taught by efficacious *Grace*, we may *deny Ungodliness* and *Worldly Lusts*, and live *soberly, righteously and godly, in this present World* : Hastening apace by abounding Thanksgiving, in practical Time-Praises, to the perfect Praises, and loudest Hallelujahs, of a blest Eternity.— To the tender *Compassion*, and gracious *Protection*, of the *LORD* our *Shepherd*, I commit you : *His Grace be with your Spirit* ! In him, with the dearest Love, I am,

Yours for ever,

LETTER XXVI. To Mr. W.

Dear Sir,

YOU see what a *Trial*, my dear Yokefellow's *Death* would be to me at *this Time* ; and will easily think, that I must be under some *Pressure of Spirit*, upon the least *Suspicion* of it.— But I feel *Everlasting Arms* underneath me. Cares, like a wild Deluge, wou'd break in upon me : But I wou'd *cast all my Care, upon HIM that careth for me*. I think it a most unreasonable Thing, for a Creature, and especially for a Believer, to take the *Government of the World*, upon his own *Shoulders*, by anxious *Thought for the Morrow*.

Which of us, by taking Thought, can add one Cubit to our Stature? The Government of all Things, relating to the World, the Church, to Families, and particular Persons, even to the most minute Circumstance belonging to each; is devolved by the *Father*, upon the mighty *Shoulder* of our dear *Lord Jesus*. And *there* let it rest. I like it well. *JESUS* is my *King*; I know he will *save me*; and bring *Salvation* to my poor Soul, even by such Providences, which seem to carry *Destruction* in the very Face of them. All Things in Providence, are wrought according to the Counsel of *Jehovah's Will*; for the Glory of God, and the Good of his dear Children. *HE* is wonderful in Counsel, and excellent in Working! I see Him by Faith; I adore Him by Love; I wait for Him by Patience of Hope; even when his Footsteps are in such deep Waters, that Sense, neither natural, nor spiritual, can trace them. When I suppose the Worst, Sir, I think thus: ‘What if this Trial should be attended with a Complication of Grievs? Who made it for me? It was *my* GOD! It was appointed for me, laid out for me of Old, by an Infinity of Wisdom and Grace, for the Glory of God, and my Advantage. And what if God is to be glorify’d in me by this Trial?’—And then my Heart flows complacently into the Will of God, and says, ‘Lord, give me but Grace to glorify thee: And Father, work thy Will.’—Oh, dear Sir, GOD is my ALL! GOD in CHRIST is *my Portion*! I would live upon Him as *such*; and in Comforts and Crosses, in Life and Death, be wholly dedicated to *his Glory*. I would have no *Will*, but GOD’s; no *Interest*, but *His*; no *Care*, but to glorify Him. I think it a great Shame, for a Soul blest with Fellowship with GOD, to have a contrary Will, a contrary Interest to *His*.—And yet, alas, I am a feeble Worm, crushed before the Moth!

Oh

Oh that the *Power of CHRIST* may rest upon me, and his *Strength* be made perfect in my *Weakness*: That in this Trial, I may walk *worthy of God, unto all Pleasing!*—For this, help me, dear Sir, by your Prayers. — And your Lord and mine, will richly reward your Kindness, like his Great SELF! I am persuaded, dear Sir, it wou'd rejoice your Heart, to serve CHRIST, in serving the least of His. And never was such a MASTER, as our JESUS! Himself will *serve his Servants!* He will make them sit down to Meat, gird Himself, and come forth and serve them. Oh wondrous Grace! What, the Lord of Glory, serve his Creature-Worms! The Worms He lov'd and wash'd in his own Blood, to make them *Kings and Priests, unto God and his Father!* — ' Oh our Beloved, draw us with the Cords of thy ' Love, bind us to be free in thy Service, to cast ourselves, our Time, and All, in all the little Love our ' Souls are capable of, as a Drop of Duty, into thy ' boundless Love, that Ocean of Glory!' — *The Grace of Christ be with your Spirit!* — I beg Leave to subscribe, dear Sir,

Your most obliged humble Servant,

L E T T E R XXVII. To ----

My very dear and Honour'd Brother,

MUCH I compassionate your dear Soul, in your present Distress; and am grieved that the Enemy hath got an Advantage against you in this great Trial, to make you think, or at least, apt to think, that God herein is your Enemy; and is not faithful to his Promise given you; or else to doubt, if you

know any Thing of the Mind of God in his Word.— Being in the Furnace, your Dross comes up, and with *Jonah*, you are ready to say, *I do well to be angry*.— But O, my Brother, will you be angry with infinite Love? This Affliction, is a special Fruit of God's everlasting Love to you. These bitter Waters, come streaming down to you, from the Heart of God, thro' the Blood of Christ, well sweetned with infinite Kindness. Not the least Dram of *Wrath*, is put into *your Cup*; nor the least Ingredient in it, however bitter to your Taste, but was put there by *Love's* All-gracious Hand. "Infinite Love, guided by unerring Wisdom, (as one well said) determines the Kind and proportions the Degree, of the Afflictions of every Child." Not the least *Grain*, Brother, in this wisely mixed *Potion* which is given you, which is so distasteful to you, could have been *wanting*, but God would have had *less Glory* in your Salvation, and you *less Happiness*, as the Saved of the Lord. Have you forgot what is said, *Prov. xvi. 4. The LORD hath made all Things for Himself?* i. e. for his own *Glory*. And what the Apostle saith, *1 Jam. v. 11. Behold, we count them happy which endure?* If there was nothing more, Brother, concerned in this Affliction, than the *Glory of God*, it is worth while to endure it for *that*, even *that alone*. But lo, your present *Happiness*, and endless *Bliss*, are concerned therein. And wou'd you have been without this Affliction upon this Condition, That God should have had *less Glory* given Him by you on the Earth? Or, That you should have had *less Grace* given you in the present Time, or *less Glory* in your eternal Crown? If you would not; attempt your Duty, to say instantly in Faith and Love, *The Cup which my Father giveth me to drink, shall I not drink it?* Let your *Will*, flow complacently into the *Will of God*, and say with a sweet

Acquiescence, *Father, glorify thy Name!* Do what thou wilt with me in the present Time; make but thy own Glory out of me, and I have enough: *Not my Will; but thine be done.* — If you should say, Brother,

Alas, I find no Addition of Grace by this Trial; I bring no Glory to God by it: Of what Advantage then can it be unto me? — I answer,

If hitherto you have been *as a Bullock unaccustomed to the Yoke, God for Christ's Sake forgiveth you:* And your present Sin, by over-ruling Grace, shall be the Matter of your future Humiliation; of that Humility, which precedes Glory, and will be your Preparation, for eternal Exaltation. — I do not say, That your Sin will do you Good. Such an Assertion would be abominable in itself; and I believe, abhorred by you. *Shall we sin that Grace may abound? God forbid!* — But this I say, Unto us who are under Grace, *where Sin hath abounded, Grace doth much more abound:* And effects its great Designs, to the endless Praise of its own Glory, by over-ruling into a Subserviency thereto, the greatest Contraries, even those very Things, which have a native Tendency to dethrone Grace, and despoil it of its Glory, and to plunge its Subjects into the deepest Misery. — This as to what hath already been. — But, *O let the Time past suffice!* Say, *Once have I spoken, yea twice; but I will proceed no farther. I have heard of thee by the Hearing of the Ear; but now mine Eye seeth thee; Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in Dust and Ashes.* — It will be no Offence, Brother, nor Grief of Heart to you, when you come to Heaven, that you was called to glorify God, by this Trial on the Earth; nor that your Grace was increas'd thereby, unto eternal Glory; but both will be the Matter of your endless Joy. And will you grieve now, for that which shortly and perpetually will be your Heart's Delight? O dry
your

Tears, cease Weeping, begin Rejoicing, anticipate by Faith, the Glories of Sight. — Come, my dear Brother, you are *under Grace*, that forgives your Sins, that will subdue your Iniquities, that will strengthen your Graces, and out of Weakness make you strong. *Everlasting Arms are underneath*. And *sink you shall not, in deep Waters*. Your Shoes shall be Iron and Brass; and as your Days, your Strength. Say then in Faith, tho' foil'd by the Adversary; *Rejoice not against me, O mine Enemy; when I fall, I shall arise: When I sit in Darkness, the LORD shall be a Light unto me. I will bear the Indignation of the LORD, because I have sinned against him, until He plead my Cause, and execute Judgment for me: He will bring me forth to the Light, and I shall behold his Righteousness*. For, *The Trial of your Faith worketh Patience, and Patience Experience, &c.*

Your former Trial, Brother, made your late Happiness more sensibly sweet and Heart-endearing.—And easily you might slide, as it were insensibly, into an Extreme of Creature-Love. Which might provoke the jealous Eyes of the Lord your Lover, to strip you of a Creature, that stole your Heart from him the Creator: To his Dishonour and Displeasure, and to your Disadvantage, present and eternal. And evident it is, that we have *exceeded* in Love to a Creature, if when the Lord takes what he gave, it must be *rent* from us. If we don't freely *resign* the Creature or Thing He *calls for*; we lov'd the same *inordinately*.—How kind then, and endearing was the *Hand*, that took away your *blooming Joy*, which robb'd Him of his *Crown of Glory*, of that Glory due from *you*, to Him your great Lord! And that took away that *Honey*, whereof you was like to *surfeit*! O my Brother, your *Lord's Love* is kind. 'Tis a *Love-Stroke* that is given you. And his Voice herein to you is, 'Come, thou
 ' dear

‘ dear Object of my infinite Love, take up thy Delights in ME. I have took away the *Desire of thine Eyes with a Stroke* ; that *I* might have thy *Heart* ; that *I*, who am *All Desires*, might be to thee, *All Delights* : To my present and endless Praise, and to thy present and endless Bliss. Come, taste how ineffably sweet, the uncreated eternal Fountain is, now the Creature-Stream, that transient Flow, is dry’d up and gone. *Why is thine Heart grieved ? and why eatest thou not ? am not I better to thee than ten Sons ?* And is this your *Beloved’s Voice*, my Brother : Will you not say, returning *Love*,

‘ O my Lord, thou *Altogether lovely One*, thou *Lover* of my Soul, *Thou*, even *Thou alone*, art more *excellent* to me, than *Mountains of Prey* ! Than all the Creatures, amass’d in One ! Stript of that which *is not* ; on which I *set* mine *Eyes* ; I’ll henceforth, by thy Grace assisting, clothe myself with THEE, whose Name *is*, I AM ! And bathe my Soul in Pleasures, in THEE, thou boundless, bottomless, endless Ocean of all Delights ! *Forgetting my Father’s (Adam’s) House*, the Creatures and Relations of this present Time, I’ll henceforth fix the Intention of my Soul on THEE, my eternal LORD, my Husband-Lover, and in thine eternal Homage, will find my eternal Joy ! — If thus your dear Soul is bro’t nearer to *Christ in Love*, by the Separation of a *Creature* from you, that us’d to divert your *Heart* ; your *Gain* will be *ineffable*, by *that Loss* ! — This, Brother, as to what has happen’d. — And next, to reconcile Promise with Providence : Consider,

The sudden *Loss* of your dear Companion, is no Argument against the *Promises* you had to direct and encourage you in the *Choice* of her. As the Lord gave her to you, and made you happy in her : The Event shews,

shews, that you had the Mind of God in espousing her. — And as to that Promise you particularly mention, *In blessing I will bless thee ; and in multiplying I will multiply thee* : The Lord doubtless signify'd there, by, That you had and should have *his Heart* in *that Mercy*, as the *Inside* of the *Blessing*. And likewise, That in giving her to you, He would *eminently* bless you. The former, you may be well assur'd of from God's Word, That you had his Heart, in that Gift of his Hand ; that he did you *Good* thereby, with his *whole Heart, and with his whole Soul*. And the latter appears from the Lord's Work : In that he made her such an *eminent Blessing* to you, while you had the Enjoyment of her. — But most surely, the Lord did not say, by that Promise, That he would give her to you for a *long Continuance of Time*. And therefore his taking her away so soon ; is no Argument against the Truth of God's *Promise*, nor against the Truth of its *Application* to you by the *Holy Ghost*. — Your concluding from what the Lord said, That you should enjoy her *long* : Was certainly a *Mistake*. Which you easily made, by drawing out *Ways* in your own Mind, and according to your Wishes, for God to fulfil his Promise to you in.

As *Eve*, when the Lord gave the first Promise, *The Seed of the Woman shall bruise the Serpent's Head* : Mistook the Mind of God therein, from her eager Desire of its immediate Accomplishment ; and tho't it must needs be her *next and immediate Seed*. Whence she said upon the Birth of *Cain*, *I have gotten a Man the LORD*, *Gen. iv. 1*. Or, the *Messiah* : As some render the Text, without the Word *from*, which is in our Translation. And I doubt not, when *Eve* saw her Mistake, she was as much try'd about it, as my dear *Brother* can be about *his*. And yet her Mistake, as
yours,

yours, was not *total*, but only *partial*. She was not mistaken, as to the *Substance* of the Promise; but as to the particular *Way* and *Time* of its Accomplishment. She having drawn out *those* which she thought *best*; and the Lord, in his Wisdom and Goodness, having design'd *those* which were *better*; more for his Glory, for the Good of his People, and for *Eve's* Joy at last, however trying the present Disappointment was.

Thus the Prophet *Jeremiah*, was sorely *tried*, and knew not how to reconcile the *Promise* of God, That *Fields* should be bought and possessed in *Jerusalem*; with his *Providence*, in that the *City* was given into the Hand of the *Chaldeans*, Jer. xxxii. 15, &c. Whence he poured out his Soul before the Lord, and pleads with him, Ver. 24. *Behold the Mounts, they are come unto the City to take it, and the City is given into the Hand of the Chaldeans, which fight against it.* — And then follows, what he could not tell how to reconcile, *And thou hast said unto me, O Lord God, Buy thee the Field for Money, and take Witnesses*, Ver. 25. The *Promise*, That Houses, Fields and Vineyards, should be again possessed in that Land; as Ver. 25. puzzled him exceedingly. He knew not how it could be fulfilled, as *Providence* seem'd directly to contradict it, and what the Lord had *said*, of the *City's* being given into the Hand of the *Chaldeans*, was *come to pass*. He therefore bro't this difficult Case before the Lord. *And thou, Lord, (saith he) seest it.* It is as if he should say, 'Lord, how can these Contraries agree, with thy 'Truth and Faithfulness in both?' His Distress seem'd to arise from his own private Tho'ts, in fixing a Time too *soon*, for the Fulfilment of the Promise: Which much perplex'd him, and put Him on thinking that it could not be *fulfilled*, as it was then so *contradicted* in Providence. — Upon which the Lord, in

condescending Grace to his distressed Servant, first assert his infinite *All-sufficiency* to fulfil his *Promise*, *Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all Flesh: Is there any Thing too hard for ME?* Ver. 27. And next informs him of the *Time* of it, that it was not to be fulfill'd *instantly*, but after their *Return* from *Captivity*. And thus he sweetly reconciled the *Promise*, with the present *Providence*: As Ver. 28, &c.

And divers such partial *Mistakes*, our Lord's Disciples made, concerning what he said unto them, and his Promises given them. And thence, how greatly were they *tried*, when their Lord was *crucified*? *We trusted* (say they) *that it had been HE which should have redeemed Israel*, Luke xxiv. 21. They were so shock'd with the present *Providence*, which was so directly contrary to what they apprehended in the *Promise*, that they seemed just ready to give up their *Faith in Christ*, as the *Redeemer* of *Israel*. — Thus, some of the *Prophets* of old, before the Incarnation of our Saviour, did make some partial *Mistakes*; (as 1 Sam. xvi. 6. 1 Chron. xvii. 2. Jer. xxxii. 15, &c.) and some of the *Apostles* of Christ, when their Master was present with them. As inspired Men, were not always under the Spirit of Inspiration, but sometimes tho't and spoke of the Things of God, from their human Judgment. Tho' they never did so, in any Part of Divine Revelation, given either in the Old Testament, or the New, but for that, were always under immediate Inspiration.

And if those great Men of God, were subject to some partial *Mistakes*, about the Ways and Times of the Lord's fulfilling his Word: O how easy is it for such little, weak Worms as *we* to be *mistaken*, as to some *Particulars* relating to the *Promises* He gives us! Let us not think it *strange*, Brother; or that the *Pro-*
mise

mise fails, in the Substance of it, when we mistake as to some Circumstances attending it. But in Faith and Patience let us possess our Souls, and wait the Lord's Way and Time to fulfil his Word: For not a *Yot* nor *Tittle* of it shall fall to the Ground, or pass away unfulfilled.

And wise and gracious are the *Ends* of our great GOD, who is *great in Counsel and mighty in Work*, in permitting our little *Mistakes*. As 1. The Honour of his Power and Goodness, in supporting us *under* our Weights of Trouble, occasion'd thereby. 2. That He might shew his Grace, by ministring suitable Relief to us *in Distress*; and working glorious Deliverance for us *out of it*. 3. That *thereby* He might shew us our *own Weakness*. 4. That by the *Trial* He might exercise and increase our Graces. 5. That He might thereby *fit us* for his Service; to sympathize *with*, and speak a Word in Season *unto*, our weary Brethren, in whom the same Afflictions are accomplished. And 6. That He might thus prepare us *for*, and confer *upon us*, a more weighty Crown of Glory. — And in all these Respects, my Brother, the Lord can fulfil his *Promise* to you, *In blessing to bless you, and in multiplying to multiply you*, even by this very *Providence*, which to you appears to thwart it, and is so contrary to your Expectation.

Think not then, That your *Work for Him*, is entirely *done*. For, *out of Weakness*, you shall be *made strong*: And by these Afflictions, prepar'd to administer Consolations, to *comfort others*, by the same *Comfort* where-with you yourself are *comforted of God*.

And don't be *weary of the World*, Brother. Long to be *with Christ*, which is *far better*; you may and ought. And if this *Providence* is blest to wean you more from present Things, it is your Mercy. But be

willing to stay the *Lord's Time*, till his *whole Will* is done upon, in and by you: As his Glory and your Bliss, present and eternal, are concern'd therein. God's dear Servants, under Pressures, may have immoderate Desires to be dissolved, and be at Rest. Which may proceed from some Degree of Impatience, or Unwillingness to endure those Trials, which must precede, and prepare for, their future Crown. As *Jon. iv. 3.* *Therefore now, O LORD, take, I beseech thee, my Life from me; for it is better for me to die, than to live.* — You say, Brother,

“ My Case is not like *Abraham's*, when call'd to
 “ offer up *Isaac*; He received him again. Nor like
 “ *Jacob's*, when he said, *Joseph* is not, and *Simeon* is
 “ not; *all these Things are against me*: For he had
 “ them both again. God sometimes writes Death
 “ upon the Promise for a while, to try the Faith and
 “ Patience of his Children; and then fulfils it. But
 “ He has writ Death absolutely upon mine, and laid
 “ my Glory in the Dust. I know she cannot return
 “ unto me.” — I reply,

It is your *Mistake*, Brother, That God has writ *Death* absolutely upon his *Promise*. This killing Dispensation, so cross to your Expectation, doth not touch the Grace of the *Promise*, nor in the least *infringe* the Truth of it; but is and shall be the *Means* of its farther Accomplishment. What if God's Design, in giving you a Taste of *Creature-Sweetness*, and taking it away unto *great Bitterness*: Was to shew you more of *Creature-Emptiness*, that so He might fill you more abundantly with his *infinite Fulness*? Will not this be a farther Extension of the Promis'd Grace, *In blessing to bless, and in multiplying to multiply you*? — And what if God intended by the Promise, not only to bless you in your late *Relative*, but also in that *Relation*, by giving

giving you *another* Bosom Friend, instead of *that* which you have lost? You can't receive *Her* again, in *Person*. But you may in *Value*. Is not God able to give you another that shall be as *greatly*, and more *abundantly* blest for your Comfort, while taught by the *Vanity* and *Uncertainty* of the Creature you have *lost*, you enjoy God in another, and in *Him* a Permanency of Blis, that shall *never be taken from you*? — But if God should not give you another *Bosom-Companion*; if in the Want thereof, He gives you more of *Himself*; won't *that* be *better*? Tho' you can't have the Joy of your deceased Relative again, in *Her* personally; may'nt you have the same Comfort in God transcendantly? What are *Creatures*, the whole Host of them universally? Is there any Comfort to be had in them, that is suited to the Nature of an immortal, Heaven-born Soul, that is not to be enjoy'd in the *Creator* substantially and eternally? — Wherefore, Set not your *Eyes* with Grief upon that which *is not*, upon the lost Stream; but look with Joy on *HIM* which *is*, and is for you, an Ocean of Blis, *Yesterday, To-day, and for ever the Same!*

I should have given a Hint to your *Mistake*, “When looking on the *Parts* and *Experience* of your deceased Friend, you tho't that God had designed her for peculiar *Service*, in the Place He had set her.” That this *Tho't*, being formed from the *visible Appearance of Things*; was just such as *Samuel's* was, when looking on *Eliab's* Stature, He said, *Surely the LORD's Anointed is before him*, 1 Sam. xvi. 6. And the Disappointment you met with, should not be your Distress, as His was none to Him.

Once more, Tho' your Heart was enlarged to *pray* for your dear Yokefellow's *Deliverance*; which the Lord did not please to grant. He can and will answer

swer your Prayer, in some *other* and *better Way*. And most graciously will the Lord accept and reward your *Faith*, in your Attempt of Duty, *Not to stagger at the Promise of God thro' Unbelief*. And some glorious *Fruit of Faith*, you shall certainly *receive*. Tho' you had it not in the *Way* you wish'd, and had devis'd in your *own Heart*; you shall find it in a *better*, contrived and prepared for you of God: Which you'll soon see, was more for his Glory, and your transcendant Bliss.—Wherefore, Let the *Government* of all Things rest upon your *Lord's Almighty Shoulder*; where the whole *Weight* of it is devolved by the *Father*; and all Things shall *end well*, to your *endless Joy, Wonder and Praise*: And what you *know not now*; you shall thus *know hereafter*.—That the *Peace of God which passeth all Understanding*, may keep your *Heart and Mind thro' Christ Jesus*: And His *Grace be with your Spirit*: is the hearty Desire and Prayer of, dear Sir,

Your most affectionate Friend and Servant,

L E T T E R XXVIII. To Mrs. C.

My dear Sister,

WE may see what *Vanity and Vexation* are in every Thing here; what *Thorns and Briars* run thro' all the Ground; and what little *Dependance* is to be had on all the Creatures. Happy are the Souls that have *GOD* for their *ALL*, that *Fountain of Sweetness*, that *Ocean of Delights*! Who will cause those that love *HIM*, to inherit *Substance*, and never fail; nor forsake the Souls that trust in *Him*, thro' *Time*, nor to *Eternity*! A true Christian, in the Exercise of
Faith,

Faith, hath enough in GOD, to satisfy all his Desires, and need not, doth not, go out of HIM, for any Delight. Whenever we depart from the LORD our Rest, it is by an *evil Heart of Unbelief*. And oh what Fools are we, ever to stir out of the Bosom of GOD! All is Joy and Peace *there*; and nothing but Sorrow and Disquietude every where *else*. How sad is it, that those happy Souls, who have the LORD for their *Portion*, should not always live upon Him, and rejoice in Him as *such*! How do the Things of Time and Sense, thro' the Influence of Sin and Satan, divert us with their pleasing Shews, from real Pleasure; or distract us with their pinching Cares, to our real Grief? And by both rob us of that Fulness of Bliss, which is to be enjoy'd in GOD! GOD will be our *All in All* in Heaven; and the more we esteem Him *so* on Earth, and practically live upon Him as *such*, the more are we prepar'd for the Heavenly State. What would such a Soul do in *Heaven*, that can't make a Life out of GOD? And tho' there, GOD will be all to us in HIMSELF, *without* the Creatures; He is here to be enjoyed as *such* *in* them, by every Heaven-born Soul. In Comforts, in Crosses, in Gains, in Losses, GOD is to be enjoy'd by a Believer. Which spreads such a Glory, and Sweetness thro' all, that Strangers to GOD, neither see nor taste. Nothing in Prosperity, can make us *happy*, but what brings us to GOD, and enables us to serve Him; nor any Thing in Adversity make us *miserable*, but what separates us from GOD, and unfits us for his Service. GOD in CHRIST, is so full, so great, so substantial a Good, that if HE is not enjoy'd in Prosperity, it will prove but an empty Name, or rather, a Soul-insnaring Thing: And if GOD is enjoy'd in Adversity, it will be full of Sweetness, and much for our Souls Advantage. We should put an
Estimate

Estimate on both, as *true Blessings*, just so far as God is brought to *us*, and we to *Him* by either. And as to *enjoy*, so to *glorify Him* in both, should be our greatest *Concern*. The Glory of God in all, should be our chief Care, our constant Work ; since to do us Good by all, is God's Delight. If we refer all Things to God ; God will order all Things for *us*, as shall be most for his Glory, and our Advantage.

“ Fear GOD, ye Saints, and you will then

“ Have nothing else to fear :

“ Make you his Service, your Delight ;

“ Your Wants shall be his Care.”

Wishing all true Happiness in this World, and great Glory in that to come ; and requesting your Prayers and Thanksgivings for us : I remain, my dear Sister,
Yours affectionately, in the LORD,

L E T T E R XXIX. To ———

My very Dear and Honour'd Brother,

BLEST be our dear Lord, that hath brought a little Ease to your pained Heart, by that Instance of his “ accepting, and rewarding *David's* Desire to build him an House, tho' not He, but *Solomon* was the chosen Instrument for that Service.” I give Thanks likewise, that any Refreshment was given you, in what the Lord sent you by me.

Far wou'd I be, my dear Brother, from positively charging you with inordinate Love to your deceased Relative. Tho' I humbly tho't, you might possibly exceed. I know by sad Experience, that we are apt to exceed in Love to Creatures and Things, given us thro'

thro' Prayer, and by the Promise, and which we enjoy God in, and bless him for. And tho' we mayn't see our Excess in the Enjoyment of Mercies, yet manifest it is in the Loss of them, if when the Lord *calls* for what he gave, we don't *freely resign* to his *Will*, and bless him for *Taking*, as well as *Giving*. If we have any particular Solace in any *Creature* or *Thing* the Lord gives, that we can't find in *God*, substantially and transcendently, when it is taken from us; we certainly lov'd that *Creature* or *Thing* *inordinately*, or gave it that *Affection*, that *Attachment*, which is due unto *God alone*. We lov'd not that *Creature* or *Thing* so purely as we ought, *in God*, and *for Him*, but as a *separate Good*, or something *besides Him*, that gave us Pleasure. For if we lov'd the LORD as we ought, as the *Summum Bonum*, the *Chiefest Good*, the *ALL* of our Bliss; whence are these *Lowings* and *Bleatings* of our Souls, after *Creatures*? Doth not *all Fulness* dwell in *Christ*? Is there not in *HIM* a Fulness of all Relations? And of the choicest and most delightful Dispositions? And is he with us, ever with us, and all that He hath, *ours*: And yet if a *Creature* is taken from us, our *Hearts* can get no *Rest*? O, if this is the Case; *that Creature*, we in some Sort, in some Degree, made *our God*. And good, good it is, that we should be stript of such *Creatures*, to shew us our Folly, in *forsaking* the LORD, the *Fountain of living Water*, and *hewing* to ourselves *Cisterns*, *broken Cisterns*, *that can hold no Water*. That thence, thro' trying Providences, and the efficacious Teachings of Divine Grace, we may learn more Wisdom: To drink at the *Fountain-Head*, when the *Stream of Brooks* fails us; and take our Fill more purely and abundantly from that *River of Water of Life*, *clear as Crystal*, which *proceedeth out of the Throne of GOD* and of the LAMB. — Be all Obedience,

Brother ; to *delight* your *Lord's Heart*. Resigning *Abraham*, in his cheerful offering up his *Isaac*, was called *The Friend of God*. Is there any Joy like this, To give your *Lord Pleasure* ? Is not the *Lamb*, that bought you with his *Blood*, worthy ? Worthy of yourself, and of the Whole of your Service, Love and Joy ? And to please and delight him, and also to honour him, won't you give him Leave to *give and take* with you ? To do any Thing and every Thing, *He pleaseth* with you ? Will you *contend* with him for taking his *own* ? Will you say, ' It was *mine*, Lord ? ' No ; rather say, ' Lord, *I am thine* ; and all thou gavest, ' givest, or shalt give me, entirely at *thy Dispose*. I ' will call nothing *my own*, but *thy Great SELF* ! And ' delight that *Thou*, shouldst be the sole *Proprietor* of ' *me and mine*.'—And such a Frame of Spirit, Brother, will be for your present Joy, and future Glory.

I am glad that you have a *Desire*, to have the *Will present*, tho' how to *perform*, you find not. That your gracious Lord accepts, and records, as *your Kindness* ; and commend and reward it He will, before Men and Angels, at his appearing.—I much compassionate your dear Soul, under your present Darkness, Grief and Trouble of Mind.—Be of good Comfort : *To the Upright there ariseth Light in Darkness* : Out of Darkness : *Darkness dissipating Light*.—You have not an *High Priest* that cannot be touched with a Feeling of your *Infirmities*. And soon your Lord will see you again, and your Heart shall rejoice ; and your Joy shall no Man take from you.—To the Grace of *Christ*, I commit you : In his sweet *Arms*, I leave you. And with a Heart full of Love and Sympathy, I am, dear Sir,

Yours in the Lord for ever,

LETTER XXX. To Mr. and Mrs. W.

My Dear and Honour'd Parents,

GLADLY I received your last, and return most humble Thanks for all the Instances of your paternal Kindness. The LORD is exceeding kind to evil and unthankful *me*. Oh for a Heart to love and serve Him! My Affliction has been a Trial to me, as thereby I have been in some Measure hindred from serving the Lord as I would. But I have been sweetly resign'd into his Will, and enabled to bless Him for all his Dealings with me. I rejoice, and give Thanks, that my good God, has prolong'd my Life till now, given me such a Measure of Health hitherto, and enabled me to do *any Thing* for Him. And surely I would love and bless Him, when He takes me *off* from that Manner of serving Him, in which my Soul delighteth. I would walk with my God, in the Obedience of Faith and Love, thro' Light and Darkness, Joy and Sorrow in the present State, until He brings me into Light, Joy and Glory, perfect and eternal. I know, thro' Grace, that all Things which pass over me, are for *God's Glory*, and shall turn to *my Salvation*. And I would have *no Care*, but to *glorify God*, and to answer his *Holy Will*, in every Change of Providence. I feel my own *Inability*, that without Divine Assistance I can do *nothing*. But the *Grace of Christ* is *sufficient* for me. *The Eternal God is my Refuge; and underneath are the everlasting Arms*. Well then shall I be defended from all Evil, supported under all Pressures, deliver'd from all Misery, and sav'd unto all Glory. And unto the LORD *my Salvation, my Strength and my Song, be Dominion and Praise for ever and ever*. Amen.

I was delighted, my Honour'd Father, some Time ago, with the distinguishing Love of God towards *you and me*. In taking *you and yours*, to make *us* Monuments of his *Free-Grace*, when some of our *Ancestors*, as we have Reason to fear, were left among the *Strangers to God*, and unacquainted with his *special Favour*. Oh why were *we* taken, when *others* were left! Not because we were *better than they*: But because the LORD *loved us*! Wherever Electing Love ran, before the Foundation of the World, there Calling Grace, flows in Time. And whom the Lord *calleth*, them He *justifies*, and them He will also *glorify*. Glory, my dear Father, will be the *End* of Grace. That *Grace* which has begun to save us, will save us into *Glory*! May we always rejoice in the Grace which saved *us*, and have the Joy to see Salvation brought to our nearest *Relatives*! Oh that the *Children* of my dear *Brother*, might be reach'd by *efficacious Grace*, and they also appear to belong to the *Line of Election*! That we *together* as the *saved of the LORD*, may shout *Salvation unto God, and to the Lamb for Ever*! — May the *Blessings of the everlasting Hills*, richly descend upon you, and the sensible Presence of the LORD your own God, be with you! I request your Prayers for me; and am with the greatest Affection, my Honour'd Parents,

Your most Obedient Child,

LETTER

L E T T E R XXXI. To Mr. T.

My dear and honour'd Brother in the Lord,

I Thank you for your kind Letter. I rejoice in the Kindness of our God, in making his own Truths, hinted in my Letters to Mr. W. delightful to your Soul. A *spiritual Appetite*, to relish spiritual Things, is a *distinguishing Favour*, bestow'd upon none but those that are *Christ's own*. *The natural Man receiveth not the Things of the Spirit of God: for they are Foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.* And *spiritual Men*, that have an *Appetite*, a *Capacity* to relish spiritual Things, can have no *actual Relish* thereof, without the *actual Presence*, the immediate Influences of the *Holy Ghost*. 'Tis *He that Takes of the Things of Christ, and of the Father, and shews them unto us*. Oh did we know how much there is done for us by all the *Three Persons in God*, in every Degree of Soul-Comfort and spiritual Pleasure that is given us, we should not count the *Consolations of God small*. It is the *Spirit of Truth*, in his special Operations as the *Comforter*, that, according to our Lord's Promise, *guides his People into all Truth*, John 16. 13. It is *He*, that enlightning our Minds, guides us into the Doctrinal Knowledge of every Truth; and enkindling our Souls with the Truths known, that gives us Heart-Fellowship therewith. A *Guide*, you know, that conducts another, must be *actually present* with him, or he can't be assistant to him as such. So, without the *actual Presence* of the *Holy Ghost*, going before us into any Truth, and giving us *Access, Manuduction* into it; not the least spiritual *Truth* can we know, nor the least Degree of spiritual Knowledge thereof, can

we attain. Oh, it is the *actual Presence* of the *Holy Ghost* as our *Comforter*, that, by his *Light* and *Heat*, irradiates our *Mind*, and enflames our *Souls* with the *Knowledge* of *Divine Truth*. Let the *Truth* shine ever so brightly, or warmly *round about us*; unless the *Holy Spirit* shines into our *Minds*, unto the *Knowledge* of the *Truth* in its *Glory* and *Efficacy*; we neither *see* its *Light*, nor *feel* its *Heat*.—What need then have we to *ask* for the *Holy Spirit*? And how much are we *Debtors to Him*, as our *Guide* into all *Truth*, for every *Degree* of our *Knowledge* thereof, and *Fellowship* therewith! Oh the infinite *Grace* of the *Holy Ghost*! how much doth He *do* for us, in every *Kind*, and *Degree* of *spiritual Joy*, which He gives us! And lo, He doth not *speak of Himself*: but whatsoever He shall *Hear*, saith our Lord, that shall he *speak*. As the *Holy Ghost*, in infinite *Condescension* to us, has accepted the *Office of Comforter*; So in his *Discharge* thereof, He doth not *speak* to us in any *Truth*, nor in any *Part* of it, *of Himself*. That is, of *Himself merely*, and *abstractly* from the *Father* and the *Son*. But strictly regards his *Mission* from them, To shew us their *Persons*, their *Acts* and *Works*, their *Thoughts* and *Words*, their *Glories* and their *Grace*. Thus the *Holy Ghost* *bears* what the *Father*, and the *Son* say, for and about *our Consolation*; Takes all the *Particulars*, and receives all the *Grace*, to bring it down to us. He shall receive of *Mine*, saith our Lord, and shall shew it unto you. All Things that the *Father* hath are mine: therefore said I, that He shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you, ver. 14, 15. Oh this *Receiving*, this *Taking* of *Christ's*, and of the *Father's* Things, by the *Holy Ghost*, to shew them unto us; doth imply in it, The boundless *Love* of the *Father*, and of the *Son* towards us, their infinite *Care* of

of us, and the gracious *Regard* which They have for *our Consolation*. As the Holy Ghost *Receives* these Things of the Father and the Son, He receives them as *given* from both for us. And HE being God equal with both, in the same boundless *Love* towards us, infinite *Care* of us, and gracious *Regard* for *our Consolation*, He *Takes them* as given. And having voluntarily accepted the Office of Comforter, to *apply* all that Grace and Salvation to us, which was given us in the eternal Counsels and Covenant of the *Three-One* God, and which in the Dispensation of the Fullness of Times, is to be given out to us: Down He flies on the Wings of Love, as sent from the Father and the Son, and from the good Pleasure of his own Will, He *brings* the same to us.

You see then, my dear Brother, That our spiritual *Knowledge* of God and his *Truths*, our *Delight* in, and *Fellowship* with them; are no *casual Things*, that fall out by Hap or Chance, that might *be*, or *not be*: But are Matters of *Appointment*, and of great *Moment*, in which *Father, Son* and *Spirit*, in boundless Grace to us, are concerned. And let us hence learn, To put a high *Value* upon, to be very *thankful* for, and to have a due *Regard* to, the *Comforts of the Holy Ghost*, and to every *Degree* of his Consolation. Since there is not the least, but springs from so *great Grace*! And let all the *Comforts of the Holy Ghost*, as so many *Cords*, bind our Souls, in *Love* and *Duty* to the Comforter. Oh let us beware of *Sin*, that we don't grieve Him. Let us *credit* his Testimony, *mind* his Motions, and *obey* his Dictates. And in all Manner of holy Conversation and Godliness, behave as such, that are so highly favour'd with the *in-dwelling Presence* of the Comforter, and with the *Consolations of God*!

You

You say, my dear Brother, “ That you expect Benefit from my Correspondence; but I must expect none from yours.” I hope you expect nothing from *me*, seperate from *Christ*; from a *Branch*, seperate from the *Root*; from a *Beam*, seperate from the *Body of the Sun*. It is a great Thing, to be thoroughly sensible of the *Nothingness of the Creature*, both with respect to ourselves and others. That the Creature is *Nothing, less than Nothing, and Vanity*; and the LORD ALL, and *in All*. That all the Excellency, Comfort and Usefulness of the Creature, is wholly *derived* from, and *dependant* upon its Creator. And if thus, my dear Brother, you expect Benefit from *Me*, looking singly to the LORD for it; I am persuaded you will not be disappointed. For *none of them that trust in Him, shall be desolate*. God can supply you with all the Good you want or desire, either mediately, or immediately, which Way soever He pleaseth. And as for *Me*, mean and worthless as I am, glad shall I be, if the LORD will make *Me* a *Pipe*, to convey the Waters of Life, from *Him* the living *Fountain*, into your Soul. And this, my Brother, is all you could expect from *Me*, was I the most *excellent* of Creatures. And tho’ I am the *least of Saints*, and the *chief of Sinners*; yet, even *This*, the God of all Grace, is able to do for *You*, by *Me*. God can use whom *He will*, to do what Service *He please*. — And why then mayn’t I expect Benefit from *You*, that is, from *God* by *You*? *Is the Spirit of the LORD straitned*? Are any of the Members of Christ’s Body useless? Verily, The Head hath appointed to every one its Place and Use; effectually worketh in every Part, unto the Edification of the other, and in the Infinity of his Grace, says concerning all, even the most *feeble*, That they are *necessary*. — I shall be glad to know the Frame of
your

your Soul, to hear from you when you have Leisure, and to have an Interest in your Prayers. — I am, dear Sir,

Yours Affectionately in JESUS,

LETTER XXXII. To Mr. R.

My dear and honour'd Brother in Christ,

AS by that dear Servant of Christ, the Rev. Mr. W. and our dear Friend Mr. T. I am inform'd that you desire a Line from me; I embrace the first Opportunity to write. — And now, my dear Brother, What shall I say? I rejoice with you, and all the Lord's People, for the glorious Things which God is doing in Scotland. Surely the Lord calls upon us hereby, *To arise and trim our Lamps, to go forth to meet the Bridegroom.*

Dear Sir, as to the present *Frame* of your Soul, I am entirely ignorant of it. But from the Account given me of your *State*, I feel a springing Love to you, and Brother T. and shall rejoice to have a little Talk with you on the Road, in our Way to Heaven. Oh that our JESUS would join Himself to us, and make *our Hearts burn within us, while He talketh with us by the Way!* And as God's Free-Grace, hath made Us, poor Strangers, that were once afar off, *Nigh by the Blood of Christ*; I would say unto You, as our Lord once did unto his Disciples, *Children, have you any Meat? — Come and Dine.*

Come, feast upon the Lamb of God. The Father hath given his Son, and our Lord hath given Himself, to die for us, that we might live! Oh, *Love, passing*
N
Know.

Knowledge! A crucify'd JESUS, is our Life! What do you *want*, my Brother? Here's *All* in CHRIST; who was once dead, and now lives for you, that you can possibly need or crave! *Life* of all Kinds, is in Him, *Life* in its highest Perfection, and *Life* of an endless Duration! And thro' the *Death* of your glorious Lover, all his Life is made *yours*! Come by Faith daily, into the Wounds of CHRIST; and there take in all the Grace and Life your Soul wants. For all the *Grace* and *Life* of the *New Covenant*, of the God of the Covenant, is bestow'd upon you, and irreversibly confirmed to you in the *Lamb's Blood*! Here's a *Fulness*, that you may be *free* with! A *Fulness*, that you can neither *exhaust*, nor *waste*! A *Well of Life*, that is *full*, *deep*, and *endless*! A *Sea of Glory*, that has neither *Bottom*, nor *Bound*! Oh my Brother, If all that is in God, the All sufficient, and Eternal God, is *enough* to fill you; you shall be *filled* with all Grace thro' Time, and with all Glory to Eternity! For God in CHRIST, is *yours*! and *You are His*! You are loved into an entire *Interest* in Him, and indissoluble *Union* to Him, and an eternal *Communion* with Him! God the *Father* lov'd you, and gave you all this Glory in *Christ*, before the Foundation of the World! *Lov'd you*, and gave his Son in the Fulness of Time, to *die* for you; to procure all this Glory for you, and to secure it to you! God the *Son* lov'd you, and gave Himself to Death, for your Life, to bring you to Glory! And God the *Holy Ghost* has lov'd you, and given you the Beginnings of all this Glory in your own Soul! He Himself is become the *Earnest* of this your vast *Inheritance*; and by his Joys, has given you the *First fruits* of the good Land! And *He that has begun the good Work in You*, will perform it, until Grace is perfected in Glory, and *Mortality* swallow'd up of *Life*! Of Glory-
Life,

ry-Life, in the immediate Vision and Fruition of God, unto Ages without End ! — Oh what a firm *Foundation* then, hath your Faith to rest on ! What *Encouragement* have you to Duty, since all the Fulness of CHRIST is *Yours* ! And what *Obligations* are *You*, am I, and all the Heirs of Grace under, to give it all the *Glory*, in a *Walk worthy of God*, in Heart, Lip and Life ! — *The Grace of Christ be with your Spirit*. Pray for, Dear Sir,

Yours in the LORD,

LETTER XXXIII. To Mrs. G.

My Dear Sister in the Lord,

I Am glad, that as one of Christ's *Lambs*, you are under the *Care* of our great *Shepherd*. Verily, He will not suffer you to want any good Thing. He *lov'd* you, and gave his *Life* for you, when in his Fore-view, Ungodly ! *Lov'd* you, and *Quickned* you, when *dead in Sin* ! *Lov'd* you, and took you *up*, in all your Weakness and Wants, into his own Bosom, his own Arms ; into his own Fulness of Grace and Power, *to save you to the uttermost* ! He *loves* you, and will never *repent* what He has done for you ; never cast you off, nor forget you, leave, nor forsake you ; but follow you with his *Grace*, until He has brought you to Himself in *Glory* ! Oh did you *know* the infinite *Tenderness* of Christ's Heart towards you ; you would *run* into his Bosom, in all your Times of Distress. Christ loves you as a Member of his own Body, as his *own Flesh*. And from an infinite Fulness of Sympathy with you, and Power to help you, will nourish and cherish you, succour and save you, in and from all your Griefs,

and unto the uttermost of all your Desires! Yea, He will do for you, *exceeding abundantly above all you can ask or think!* Oh, our tender *Shepherd*, takes a peculiar Care of his *Lambs!* His *Bowels* yern towards them, in all their Weakness and Wandrings; and with his *Arm* will He gather them, and in his *Bosom* will He carry them: To secure them from all Deaths, and Dangers, to nourish and preserve them unto *Life Eternal!* Christ will be sure to lose none of his *Weaklings*; but *These* in a special Manner, shall be the Objects of his Care, of his infinite Tendernefs! Christ hath a *tender Heart* towards the Weak and Diseased of his Flock, a *tender Eye* to look upon their Griefs, and a *tender Hand* to bind up their Wounds and relieve their Souls. His Power to help and save us, is *Infinite!* And his Compassions never fail! His Fulness we can never spend, with all our innumerable Wants! Nor will He ever wax weary of supplying us, but *rejoice over us to do us Good, with his whole Heart, and with his whole Soul!* Oh there is none like Christ! He is the *Chief of ten Thousand, and Altogether Lovely!* And *This*, my dear Sister, is your *Beloved!* and *This* is your *Friend!* Wherefore, *Trust you in the LORD for ever;* and, *Rejoice in Him always:* for nothing past, present, or to come, shall ever *seperate you from his Love!* — Unto his Grace I commit you: And am,

*Yours most Tenderly, in the
Bowels of JESUS CHRIST,*

L E T T E R XXXIV. To Mrs. A.

I Could not help sending you a Line, to tell you, That *JESUS loves you:* and that *I love you for his Sake.* Oh Dear Soul, *what great Things has the LORD*
done

done for you ! How sweetly has He opened your Heart by his Grace, and made you *Willing in the Day of his Power*, to be saved alone by Jesus Christ, to have Him for your *Time-Portion*, and your *eternal ALL* ! Christ was first *willing* to marry *You*, to betroth you to Himself for ever ; or you had never been *made willing* to give up yourself to *Him*. Christ *first desir'd you*, or you had *never desir'd Him*. It was *his* first Love to *you*, that laid *Hold* of your hard Heart, and *drew* your Soul to love Him. You had never seen CHRIST'S Beauty, and been *sick of Love* for HIM, the fairest of all Fairs, the *Chiefest of ten Thousand* ; if HE had not reveal'd himself unto *you*, as He doth not unto the *World* : In order to allure your Soul after Him, and to satisfy and solace you with Himself for ever. Be of good Cheer, then : For CHRIST and *You* are *one* ! CHRIST has given Himself to be *yours*, and taken you to be *His*, in a Marriage-Covenant. And neither Time nor Sin, Death nor Hell, shall *part you*. For *Ever*, the LORD hath *betrothed* you to *Himself* ; for *Ever*, will He *love you* as his *Bride* ; and for *Ever* shall you have the *Enjoyment* of Him, as your Glorious *Bridegroom* ! — Into his Arms I commit you, and am,

Yourself in HIM,
 Yours in HIM,

LETTER XXXV. To Mrs. W.

My Dear Sister in Christ,

I Was much troubled to hear of your, and our Loss, in the Death of your dear Father. But, my dear Sister, be not overmuch cast down ; because you have a *Father*, that can *never die*. Your dear Lord Jesus,

ever

ever lives, and lives for *You*. And, Because *He lives*,
You shall live also. So long as *Christ* lives, you shall
 never be left to go thro' the World *alone*, as an Or-
 phan, Fatherless and Comfortless; without One, to
 care for, comfort, guide and defend you. *Creatures*
 die, and leave you; but the *LORD* will never forsake
 you. *Death*, breaks all natural Relations: But *Christ's*
 Relations to you, can *never* be broken. And now *your*
Father and your Mother have forsaken you; the *LORD*,
 in an eminent Manner, *will take you up*. You are,
 and shall be *CHRIST's* Care. All that is in *HIM*, is
 engag'd for you. His Love, Grace, Mercy, Wisdom,
 Power and Faithfulness, are all engag'd to support you
 under your Distresses, to supply all your Wants, to
 lead you forth by a right Way, thro' a World of
 Trials, and to bring you safely and triumphantly Home
 to Himself in Glory, to that eternal Rest which re-
 mains for you. Cast, therefore, *your Burthen upon the*
LORD; and *He will sustain you*. Oh, run into
CHRIST's Bosom, flee into his Arms. They stand
 wide open, to receive and embrace you. Come, my
 dear Sister, Put *CHRIST* for a Well, while you are
 passing thro' this Valley of Baca, this Vale of Tears.
 And you will find Him to be such a Well of Life,
 such an overflowing, and ever-flowing Spring of all
 Supply, that you shall want no good Thing. There
 is enough in *CHRIST*, to supply, solace and satisfy
 you, thro' Time, and to Eternity. And such is his
 Grace, that it delights Him greatly, to see you come
 to Him for all you want, in this your Time of Need.
 Yea, He will count Himself Honour'd, if now you
 will make Him your ALL. And verily, He will not
 send you empty away. The Strength of his Bowels,
 will bind Him to supply all your Wants. He can no
 more deny *You* any Thing that He sees best for you,
 than

than He can deny *Himself*. Because He has made you *one*, inseparably and eternally *one with Him*, and loves you as *Himself*.

And as for your deceased Relative, consider, *Your Loss*, is *his Gain*. He has now done with all the scratching Thorns, and grieving Briers of the Wilderness, and is got into the Land of Rest. He is now, where He *would be*, even *with CHRIST*, which is far, far better. Make haste to follow him. Dispatch your Business, do all you may for CHRIST, while it is Day. And in the diligent Use of all the Means of Grace, See that you also be ready. For the Lord Jesus will come quickly, and take you also Home to Himself: And so shall you be for Ever with the Lord. In HIM, with dear Love, I am,

Yours for Ever,

L E T T E R XXXVI. To — —

S I R,

IT gives me Joy to hear, that you have so much of the Fear of God before your Eyes, that you will not profane the holy Sabbath, by *selling any Thing on the Lord's Day*. O that God may keep this Thing ever in your Mind, and enable you to be stedfast in this your good Resolution! For, *Whatsoever good Thing any Man doth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free*. Morality, Sir, is an excellent, lovely Thing. It is excellent and lovely in the Sight of God, and of all good Men, and being full of Majesty, it strikes a Terror upon the Consciences of wicked Men. And there is no Part of moral Virtue exercis'd

cis'd by any Man, but shall in this Life, in temporal Blessings, receive from God its full Reward. If you will lose any Thing for God, Sir, HE will make up that Loss, and bless you with double Gain.—The Town, Sir, is a most wicked Place. Ungodliness runs down the Streets thereof like a mighty Torrent; and none, alas! none there is to stem the Tide of it. Profane Cursing and Swearing, vile and beastly Drunkenness, Scoffing and Scorning of those who run not with others to the same Excess of Riot, with horrid Profanation of the Lord's Day, abound in the wretched Place.—You must therefore expect, Sir, that your Temptations to Sin, will be many. But if God helps you to withstand, your Honour and Happiness will be the greater. Satan will tempt you, Sinners will entice you; and you have no Strength to keep yourself. Flee therefore, Dear Sir, to the Strong for Strength: Make your Refuge under the Shadow of *Jehovah's* Wings: Say with the Psalmist, *Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe!* God can strengthen you to resist a tempting Devil, to Non-compliance with enticing Sinners, and enable you to set your Face like a Flint, in his Service.—And what an Honour will it be, if God should have brought you to the Town, to be a Blessing to it! A Means of its Reformation, if it is but in this one single Point, as I trust you will be, if you stand fast to your Resolution, *Not to sell on the Lord's Day!*—And to this, add, a strict Watch, lay a Restraint on yourself, that you admit not *vain Company*, nor *vain Discourse*, on God's *holy Day*; but spend the Whole of it in the publick and private *Worship of God*. Give yourself to Reading and Prayer. Esteem the *Word of God* given for your Perusal, and *Liberty* to approach his *Throne*, as Privileges unspeakable; and the *Sabbath*, a choice Means of your Soul's Advantage, present and eternal:

eternal: For such it is in the natural Tendency of it. Let others know by your strict Observance of the *Sabbath*, that you prize the *Gift of it*, and your happy *Lot*, that you was born in *England*, who might have been born in *India*, where the Light of the Gospel, and a Day of sacred Rest, shines not.—Thus, Sir, endeavour to reform *others* by your Example. And *you* shall be blest in the present Time, and the Favourite of Divine Providence. And as to approaching Eternity, as a good Man once said, “ If I thought I should be sent to Hell *hereafter*, I would beware of sinning against God *here*: Because that *Sin*, which Man doth not commit, God will not punish.”

Perhaps, Sir, you will think this last, but a very inconsiderable Motive to Obedience. Nevertheless, it is great in Itself; if we consider the Greatness of that eternal Torment, which is the due Desert of every Sin, and which will be the certain Consequent thereof, unto all that die out of Christ. *The Wages of Sin is Death*. Death eternal, as well as Death spiritual and temporal. The Ungodly by *Sin*, treasure up *Wrath*, against the *Day of Wrath*, and the *Revelation* of the *righteous Judgment of God*. And the more Sin they commit, the greater Wrath will be justly inflicted upon them. Every Sin, is no other than Heaping up fresh Fuel, to feed the quenchless Flame of everlasting Burnings. Hence, Those who have committed less Sin, and under less Aggravation, shall find it more *tolerable* for them in the *Day of Judgment*, than those will find it whose Sins have been increased, and by Gospel Light aggravated. And if the least Drop of Wrath for Sin, will be inexpressibly *terrible* and absolutely *eternal* to a *Christless Soul*: O *who*, with presumptuous Sinners, would sin presumptuously, and thus provoke the heaviest Shower of Divine Vengeance and fiery Indignation,

dignation, to fall on his *guilty Head!* — So that, to abstain from Sin, that a Sinner if he perish, may endure the less Wrath; is a Piece of Wisdom, and a considerable Motive it may be, to excite him to legal Performances: Tho' it be but the *Negative* of Happiness, or the *Not-suffering* of so much Misery, as otherwise he should do.

As to *Eternal Life*, that is the *Gift of God*, thro' *Jesus Christ our Lord*; and is only to be enjoy'd by *Faith in Jesus*. And in order to this, we ought to hear the Lord's Voice in the glorious Gospel, even while it is call'd *To day*; that we *harden not our Hearts*, and provoke him to *sware in his Wrath*, That we *shall not enter into his Rest*. For to the Ungodly He saith, *Let the Wicked forsake his Way, and the unrighteous Man his Thoughts; and let him return unto the LORD, and He will have Mercy on him, and unto our God, for He will abundantly pardon.*

But then, Sir, consider, Tho' Duty is *ours*, Power for it is *God's*. Attempt our Duty we should, and great Encouragement for it we have: In that when we *draw nigh to God*, He hath promis'd to *draw nigh to us*. And those that diligently use the *Means* of Grace, may happily find the *Grace* of the Means descend upon them. Not because their Performances are *worthy*; but because of *God's free Mercy*; which invites Sinners to approach him in his *Son*, and makes it their bounden *Duty*. For when we have done *all* we can, in religious Performances, we must still say, *We are unprofitable Servants*; and not have the least Dependence on our own Doings, for Acceptance with God. Because such is the infinite Purity of *Jehovah's* Nature, that in Point of justifying Righteousness, He cannot accept of any Thing less than perfect Obedience to his holy Law; which we Sinners, cannot perform.

We

We are therefore call'd to *believe in Christ for Righteousness*; who hath obey'd the Law perfectly, in every of its Commands, and fully endur'd its Penalty, even all that Curse and Wrath which our Sins deserved; who are or shall be enabled to flee by Faith unto Him for Refuge: For the free Forgiveness of our Sins, thro' his All-attoning Blood, and for the Justification of our Persons, in his perfect Righteousness.—Thus *Christ the Saviour*, in his active and passive Obedience, is the *only Way* to the *Father*. For thro' Him alone it is, that we Sinners, can find Mercy with God, unto Life eternal.

And tho' we are call'd to believe in Jesus, by this great Command, and with this great Promise, *He that believeth—shall be saved*: and warned of the Danger of Unbelief, by this awful Threatning, *He that believeth not, shall be damned*: Yet is not this Faith of *ourselves*; but the *Gift of God*, to the happy Souls that experience it. For where God from the Beginning hath *chosen any Man to Salvation*; He *calls* him by his *special Grace*, at the appointed Time: Gives him his holy Spirit to dwell in his Heart, to work this saving Faith, and every Grace in his Soul. By which He gives him a new, a spiritual Nature; new Discernings, Desires, Enjoyments, and Employments. Such Discernings of his Misery as an undone *Sinner*, and of the transcendent Excellency of Christ, as the only *Saviour*, as he never had before. Such Desires after an Interest in, Communion with, and Conformity to, the *altogether-lovely* Jesus, as before he was unacquainted with. Such Enjoyments of *Christ*, and of *God* in Him, as before he was not blest with. And such Employments in holy and heavenly *Service*, for the *Glory* of God in Christ, as before were not delightful, but irksome and tedious to him.—Thus the happy Man, in whose

Heart God works Faith, flees out of Self, and Self-Dependence, unto Christ, and his Righteousness, shelters himself in this great *City of Refuge*, where he's safe from the *Wrath to come*; Enjoys the Lord as his own Saviour; And serves him in *Love*, as a *Child* doth his *Father*: Or, in a Word, is thus *passed from Death unto Life*, is blest with the *Begun-Enjoyment* of God in *Grace*, and a growing *Meetness* for the heavenly *Glory*.—And without this new Nature, this *new Birth*, our Lord assures us, That we *cannot see the Kingdom of God*. Without this *Faith* of the *Operation of God*, which works by *Love* to him, we *cannot please God*. And without being *found in Christ*, as having shelter'd ourselves under the Covert of the Redeemer's Righteousness, we *cannot stand with Acceptance* before the *Presence of the Father's Glory*.—And as our Destruction by Sin, is wholly of *ourselves*, and our Salvation by Grace, is wholly of God: How earnestly should we *seek the LORD* while he may be *found*, and *call upon him* while he is near: That *we* may be of that happy Number, who are *saved by Grace*, unto *eternal Glory*! Most heartily I wish you this ineffable Bliss: and am,
Sir,

Your sincere Friend and humble Servant,

L E T T E R XXXVII. To Mr. T.

My Dear Brother in Christ,

I Thank you for your kind Letter. Blessed be our Dear Lord, that you can say, “ You have felt “ that the Holy Ghost has taken of Christ's Things, “ and shewn them unto you.” A precious Fruit is
This,

This, of the rich, free, distinguishing *Love of God*. An Evidence, that *Christ*, and all his *Fulness* is *yours*. And He that has *begun* to manifest Himself unto *you*, as He doth not unto the *World*, will go on to shew you more and more of his *Glory*, till that which is *perfect* shall come, and you shall see Him *Face to Face*, and *know as you are known*.

The great *Mystery of Religion*, indeed lies in *knowing* all the *Parts*, which *Father*, *Son*, and *Spirit*, have acted, and do act, in our *Salvation*. In *such a Knowledge thereof*, as gives the *Soul Fellowship* with the *Mystery*, *Communion* with the Things known. Oh! it is sweet, and the peculiar Privilege of the *LORD's People*, to have such a *Knowledge* of the *Love of God the Father*, of the *Love of his Heart*, and of all its glorious Fruits, that works up the *Soul* into *filial Dispositions*, and a *Childlike Carriage* towards Him. To have such a *Knowledge* of the *Redeemer's Grace*, and of all the glorious Fruits of his infinite *Love*, that *binds* the *Soul* to the *Redeemer*, and *constrains* it to walk as the *Redeemed of the LORD*. And to have such a *Knowledge* of the *Love of the Eternal Spirit*, as an *Indweller*, *Sanctifier* and *Comforter*, and of all the glorious Fruits of it, in his inward, sanctifying, and comforting *Operations*, that *endears* the *Soul* to the *Comforter*, and makes it *obedient* to all his *Dictates*, fearful of *Sin*, that it may'nt grieve Him, and careful about *Duty*, that it may please Him. To have such a *Knowledge* of the *Acts and Works* of *Father*, *Son* and *Spirit*, as each hath a particular, and all have a joint *Hand*, in our *Salvation*, that brings the *Soul* into *Fellowship* with the *Three-One God*, changeth it into his *Image*, and engageth it to dedicate itself to Him: This, my dear Brother, is *true* and *real Religion*. A *Mystery* in the *Christian Religion*, which is *hid* from all that are *Christless*:

Christless: Whether such that are blind *Heathens*, or such that are only nominal *Christians*. And *known* it is to none but *Heaven-born Souls*, who are design'd for, and growing up into, the Glory of the *Heavenly State*.

By this we may *know* whether we are *real Christians*, and how much of *true Christianity* we have in our Souls.—To make a *Christian*, that is so *indeed*, it is necessary that the Gospel of Grace reach our Ears; that the *Knowledge* of Christ and of God in Him, be given *Doctrinally* to our Minds; that this be experienced *Influentially* upon our Hearts, and appear *Practically* in our Lives.—As to *Degrees*, there is a vast deal of Difference, between the Doctrinal Knowledge of the Things of Christ, which *one* Christian hath, and that which *another* hath; between the Heart-Influence thereof, which *one* Christian feels, and that which *another* experienceth; and between the practical Effects of known, influential Truths, which appear in the Life of *one* Christian, and in *another's*. According to that Parable of our Lord concerning the good Ground, *Those who received Seed*, the Word of the Gospel, *into good and honest Hearts*: In *all*, it was productive of *Fruit*: But *Some brought forth Thirty, some Sixty, and some an Hundred-fold*. According to the different Measures of Grace and Gifts bestow'd on them, and to their different Ages, as Babes, young Men, and Fathers in Christ.—And as it is a vain Thing for a *nominal* Christian, to think He is a Christian *indeed*, from a Knowledge of Gospel-Truths in his *Head*, without a gracious Experience of the Power thereof upon his *Heart*, and a suitable Effect in his *Life*: (Since to all that are *real* Christians, the Word of the Gospel comes not in *Word only*, but in *Power*, and brings forth *Fruit* in Holiness, unto Life Eternal) So likewise

likewise is it a great Fault in a *real* Christian, that comparatively hath but a *weak* Knowledge of the Doctrines of Faith, but *little* inward Experience, and outward Obedience; to think He is *not* a Christian indeed, because he hath not attain'd to those *Measures* of Faith, Love and Holiness, which he hears *others* speak of, and sees to be in *them*. For there is not a Soul in the World, that hath had the least Beam of the *Knowledge* of *God in Christ*, shined into his *Mind* thro' the *Word* and *Spirit* of *Jesus*, which has had any *Influence* on the *Heart*, to attract the Soul after *Christ*, and engage it to cleave to Him, *inwardly*, in the Moments of Discovery, and *outwardly*, in some Proportion therewith; but is a *true Christian*, and *really* partakes of the *Spirit of Christ*: Altho' he may be *far, far behind* many of his *Brethren*. — And so *much* of the Knowledge of the Things of God, which a Christian hath, so *much* of the inward Influence thereof as he feels, and so *much* of outward Obedience that is excited thereby; even just so *much* of *true Christianity* is in Him.

How necessary then is it, my dear Brother, that we, *Christians*, should labour after an *Increase* in true *Christianity*? To grow in *Grace*, and in the *Knowledge of Christ* daily, to increase in Conformity to God's First-born, and in an obediential Walk before God our Father, as his dear Children, to abound more and more unto all Pleasing? *Religion in Truth*, is a Soul-enlightening, a Heart-renewing, and a Life-reforming Thing. Oh what excellent Christians are *They*, of what an excellent *Spirit*, that cannot rest in present *Measures* of Knowledge, of Influence, and Practice! Nor yet in advancing *Light*, without increasing *Heat*, and a growing *Purity*! Oh how much would it be for our Lord's Honour, and for our Advantage, how much would it tend to the Increase of our Holiness here, and of our Crown of Glory hereafter, if we gave *all Diligence*, to have

have our *Hearts* duly *affected* with every *known Truth*, and with every *Degree* of our Knowledge thereof; and to have our *Lives* continually *regulated* thereby! Oh how Happy should we be, if we minded *This*, our *every Day's Work*! And so, *forgetting the Things that are behind*, *press forward towards the Mark for the Prize of the high Calling of God in Christ Jesus*: Even a perfect Knowledge of Him, Communion with Him, and Holiness to Him. — *The Grace of Christ be with your Spirit*. — Pray for me, who am, dear Sir,

Yours in the Lord for ever,

LETTER XXXVIII. To Mr. B.

Dear Sir,

HOW it is with you as to your present Frame, I know not. But most surely, tho' in a World of *Sorrows*, you have Cause to *rejoice in the LORD alway*. In HIM who *is*, and *has* all Things in *Himself*, and for you; to make you truly *happy* here, and perfectly *glorious* hereafter. Creatures and Things may fail us, a Thousand Disappointments in these attend us, and our own Heart and Flesh, in Times of Trial, and at the Time of Death, may, and will fail us. But the LORD the everlasting God, will *never fail us, nor forsake us*. And in HIM we have *ALL*, tho' we were stript of *every Thing*. As having *Nothing*, in *Creatures*, those Bits of Dependance, those Pieces of Self-Insufficiency; in our Self-existent, and All-sufficient JEHOVAH, we may possess *all Things*. When Wants are all around us, we may solace ourselves in infinite Fulness, lie down and rest in the Bosom

from of GOD in CHRIST ; in those fat, *green Pastures*, by those deep, *still Waters*, which in our JESUS, have an ever-springing, an ever-flowing Glory, and will yield us a full Supply, and present, and everlasting Delight. O how *blessed is the Man that trusteth in the LORD, and whose Hope the LORD is!* He shall be as a Tree planted by the Waters, and that spreadeth out her Roots by the River, and shall not see when Heat cometh, but her Leaf shall be green, and shall not be careful in the Year of Drought, neither shall cease from yielding Fruit. — Lord, increase our Faith! What do we want, my Brother, but more Faith, to live continually, to live joyfully, upon, and to, our own GOD in CHRIST? And Faith is *his Gift*. Let us ask the *Spirit of Faith*, the *Holy Spirit*, for freely of his immense Goodness, our *heavenly Father* will give Him to us, as his *dear Children*. Thus we shall be enabled to walk with GOD, in the Obedience of Faith and Love; and to us that *fear Him*, there shall be *no Want*.

What think you of your *Portion*, Brother, of the LORD your *Portion*? Is it not a *goodly Heritage*? Are not the *Lines fallen unto you in pleasant Places*? Since all the Perfections of *Jehovah's BEING*, are made over unto you in *Christ*, for your Salvation and Bliss, present and eternal, by Grace immeasurable, in Wisdom unsearchable! — O say not in Unbelief, as God's People of old, *Wherein hast Thou loved us? Wherein hast Thou loved me?* But mark the Answer the Lord gave, and gives, to them, and you, *Was not Esau Jacob's Brother, saith the LORD: Yet I loved Jacob, and I hated Esau. O this distinguishing Love!* Which was from *Everlasting* in Commencement, which chose and blest you in Christ before the Foundation of the World; which is *to Everlasting* in Du-
P ration ;

ration ; and which, by Calling Grace, and the Fruits of it, brightly glanceth upon you in the Limits of *Time*, as it passeth by in its *eternal Round* ! O my Brother, God hath not *so* loved all Men. No, *Jacob* was loved, when *Esau* was hated. Will you not say, *How is it Lord, that Thou wilt manifest Thyself unto me, and not unto the World* ! God might have made you one of the *Rich*, the *Great*, the *Honourable* of the Earth, yea, one of the *Monarchs*, the *Potentates* of *this World*, and have sent you away from *Himself* forever. And had He dealt thus with you, the Riches of his common Goodness, in your Time-State, had been brightly display'd. But oh, behold, These Things he thought not good enough for *you* ; These were not great enough to answer his Heart's Love to *you* ; The *Inheritance*, HIMSELF in *CHRIST*, He hath reserved for *you*, as a *Child of Promise*.

And hath God thus lov'd and blest *you*, with his *whole Heart*, and with his *whole Soul* : O love and bless the *LORD*, give Him *your Heart*, *your Life*, *your ALL* : And follow on to *know Him*, until you are lov'd by *Him*, into a perfect Conformity to *Him*, and the full and eternal Enjoyment of *Him*, in Life and Glory, *ineffable* and *unknown* ! — Live joyfully, Brother, as an *Heir of God*, and labour to walk worthy of *Him*, unto all *Pleasing*. — The Grace of our Lord *Jesus Christ* be with your Spirit ! In *HIM* with much Affection, and hearty Thanks for all Favours, I am,
Dear Sir,

Your obliged Friend and Servant,

LETTER

LETTER XXXIX. To Mrs. K.

My Dear Sister in Christ,

YOURS I receiv'd, and return you Thanks. I rejoyce that the Lord is carrying on his good Work in your dear Soul. And since *Jesus* says to you, *Be not faithless, but believing*: Will you not *obey his Voice*? Just when you *hear it*, and according to that Degree of *Power* with which it is attended on your *Heart*, I know you *will*. But, what, *Trust your Lord*, no further than you can *see him*! Credit his *Word*, no longer than just while you hear him *speak*! O the Baseness of *Unbelief*! O the *Power* of this great *Sin*, this easily-besetting *Sin*, in the *Hearts of Believers*! And yet our All-gracious Lord, pardons and pities us, under the Workings and Prevalence of this great Evil; and giveth more Grace, fresh Increases of Faith, when we are borne down by the Power of Unbelief. O his infinite Patience, and Long-suffering towards us! Who is a *God like unto Him, that pardoneth Iniquity, that passeth by the Transgression of the Remnant of his Heritage, because He delighteth in Mercy*! Doth *Jesus* hint to your Spirit, my dear Sister, "The Blessedness of believing without Sight:" And will you not *believe*, except you *see* as others have done? 'Have you seen *Jesus*, the 'All sufficient Saviour, held out by the Gospel to 'your Faith, as a perishing Sinner; ventur'd to cast 'your Soul into the Arms of his Mercy; and heard 'the pleasant Whispers of his infinite Favour thro' 'the free Promise; unto some sweet Persuasion of 'Interest, and Soul-stay upon Divine Faithfulness?' 'Tis enough, my Sister, if you had no more, for you

to believe your Interest in Christ upon, from henceforth, for Time's Ever ; until you shall live by Sight, in the Glory of endless Vision. I say, such an Experience is *enough*, for Christ's Honour and your Soul's Joy, for you to believe your *Interest* upon : Not that hereby I would deter you from *seeking* most earnestly for further and brighter *Displays* of the infinite *Love* of your own *Lord Jesus*. No ; *Open your Mouth wide*, after growing Communion with Christ in Love ; for *He will fill it*. It is a little Heaven to *long* for Christ, (a great Heaven, or rather, a Fore-taste of great Heaven) to *enjoy* Him, in our low and little State on this Earth, until the superior Glory of the Heavenly State comes on. But in all your Breathings after Communion with Christ, my Sister, seek for more glorious Shines of his *manifestative Favour*, as believing your Interest in the *eternal Love* of his *Heart*. This I say, as pointing out your Duty ; but if you can't come *at it*, vent your Desires after Christ as you *can*. If you can't come to him as a *Believer*, come as a *Sinner*, and say, ' Lord Jesus, thou great Saviour, let not a Sinner perish for want of thy Salvation, that longs for an eternal Interest in it ; furnish and die for Thirst, that pants after Communion with Thee in Love ! ' And you shall find to your unspeakable Joy, that the Saviour is full of *Bowels*, that He will not, cannot hide Himself *long*, from a Love-sick Soul, that *follows hard after him*.

And mean Time, my dear Sister, O that the Lord by me, would persuade you, that if you are not dandled on the Knee, and borne on the Side, kifs'd and embrac'd as *others* ; yet, that you are put among the *Children*, and for ever interested in God your *Father's Love* ! Aye, in the *same Love*, in which your *Brethren* stand. The Love of God's Heart towards

us in Christ, unto one and all, is the very *same*. An infinite *Variety* there is in the *Displays* of God's Love, cast upon various Souls; but an infinite *Sameness* in the Love of his *Heart*, in his *Love* as consider'd in *itself*, towards all the innumerable *Multitude* of the *saved Ones*. Our Lord may say to you, my Sister, under Discouragement, while some of your Brethren as to manifestative Love are more highly favour'd, as the *Father* to the *elder Brother*, in a Sort displeased, when the Prodigal was feasted; *Son* (Child) *thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine*. And han't He spoken thus to your Soul: '*Come, my Child, be not cast down, that thy Brethren are feasted; all my Grace is thine, all Things for Thee are ready: Come, sit down to Meat, and feast on all my Dainties prepar'd for thee, as thy own?*' And further, my dear Sister, by this Word apply'd to your Heart, our Lord might hint, that tho' you had not been so richly *feasted* as others, yet all Things for you were *ready*, prepar'd for your more abundant Delight *here*, and for your everlasting Feast *hereafter*. And will you not then come by Faith, and feast upon the delicious Sweets of the *Passover-Lamb*, *sacrificed for you*, and drink of the *Wine* of his *Love*, which flows in his *Blood*, for your *Life*; when our Lord Himself invites you to Table, to sit and feast with him *here*, as an Earnest of that richer Feast which awaits you at the *Marriage-Supper of the LAMB*, which you shall enjoy with Him *hereafter*? The Lord perswade your Heart of his Love, and draw you by his own Hand! and then you will come freely.

Go on boldly, my dear Sister, in the Lord's Name and Strength, to *venture your Soul* in the *darkest Seasons*, upon *Christ*, the *Foundation* laid in *Sion*; and fear not *sinking into Perdition*, so long as the *Rock of Ages*

Ages endures for your *Salvation*. And be assured, that it is no *Presumption*, for a perishing *Sinner*, to rest his *Soul* on the mighty *Saviour*, and to look for that *eternal Life* thro' Him, which a God that cannot *lie* hath *promised*: But that true *Faith* in the Redeemer, which by the Redeemer's Gospel is *required*. It is Satan and Unbelief, my Sister, which suggest to your Mind, That your *Faith* is *Presumption*: To rob God of the *Glory*, and you of the *Joy* of its repeated *Acts*. And whenever such a Thought darts into your Mind, instead of being discourag'd by the Enemy's Voice, let it excite your gracious Resolution the more to say, *I will go in unto the King: and if I perish, I perish*. So will your Lord be glorify'd, your Joy full, and the Enemy baffled.

As to that Text, *The Harvest is past, the Summer is ended, and we are not saved*: It need strike no Terror upon you, who thro' the Grace of the Gospel, are saved unto *Faith in Jesus*. It only respects Those, who while they *bear* of the Saviour, and *live* under the Light of the Gospel, *neglect that great Salvation* which is proclaim'd thereby, prefer *Trifles*, and lose their *Souls*: Or, that shall at last be found among Those who are *not saved*, after all the Opportunities of saving Grace are *over*. But there is not one Soul, that is gather'd unto *Christ* by *Faith*, here in *Grace*, but shall hereafter be gather'd unto Him in *Glory*; and found among that happy Number who were *saved of the Lord*, while the *Summer* of the Gospel lasted; and shall enjoy to a blest *Eternity*, all that great *Salvation*, for which they were happily prepar'd in *Time*. That your Faith and Hope in Christ may be strengthened, and your Joy and Peace thro' Him be more abundant; to a rich Increase of Holiness in Heart and

and Life: is the sincere Desire of, my dear Sister,
Your tender Friend, and Servant in the LORD,

LETTER XL. To Mrs. A. and M. W.

My dear Cousins,

SEEK JESUS, in your *early Days*! Exceeding great and precious, is that Declaration and Promise of his Grace, *I love them that love Me, and those that seek Me early, shall find Me*, Prov. 8. 17. Oh, *Christ's Love*, his Heart-Love, his manifestative Love, is *better than Life*! And wondrous is that Reserve of Favour, He hath in Store for them that seek Him betimes. Those that are drawn by Christ, to give Him their Hearts, their *first Love*, their *choicest Love*: in boundless Grace, shall be *loved of Him*, and of his Father, with peculiar Displays of infinite and everlasting Kindness. Oh my dear Children, *seek JESUS*. Seek Him, and you shall *find Him*. Find Him, and in Him you will find *Life*, of the highest Perfection, of the largest Extension, and of endless Duration. — We have *all sinned* in our first Father *Adam*, were born Sinners, and have gone astray from the Womb. *Sin has entred, and Death by Sin: Sin hath abounded, Sin reigns unto Death*. Unto Death in the Sentence, unto Death in the Execution. Unto Death spiritual, unto temporal Death as a Curse, and unto Death eternal, or that cursed State of an endless Banishment from the blissful Presence of God, to *suffer the Vengeance of eternal Fire, with the Devil and his Angels*. And all must *die*, must *thus die*, but those that *find the SAVIOUR*, who is the *Sinner's Life*. And none find

find Him, but *those* that seek Him now! *Now, now*; while Gospel-Grace is proclaimed, with a *Whosoever will, let him take the Water of Life freely*. Oh take Christ, as a free Gift, every one for yourselves. The SAVIOUR holds forth Himself to the Hand of your Faith. Stretch it out, receive, embrace Him; and He is yours for ever. — Are you *willing* to be married to the Son of God? Are you *sick of Love*, for this *altogether Lovely Lord*? Is He unto you, in your Esteem, *The Chiefest among ten Thousand*? Then will the LORD your *Maker*, your *Redeemer*, be your *Husband*. Oh give up yourselves to Him, to be entirely *His*; and you shall be of that happy Number, who are the *Bride, the LAMB's Wife*. — Fear not the LAMB's Love; He loves a Sinner *well*, that comes to Him, to be saved by Him, to be married to Him in an everlasting Covenant. And whoever, or whatever the *Sinner* be, that thus approaches the SAVIOUR's Presence, *He will in no wise cast him out*. Not a Soul shall *die*, that is willing to *accept of Christ*, upon the Bottom of *Free Grace*. Christ was *first* willing to embrace that *Soul*; or the Soul had *not* been made willing to embrace *Christ*. And He that has loved such a One into a *Sight* of his own Beauty, and a *Desire* after Union and Communion with *Him*; will strengthen the Soul in Faith, and draw it out in Love, to give up *itself* to the LORD's. While He, in Grace *unknown*, in Love that passeth *Knowledge*, receives the Soul into his own Embraces, to make it *happy* in Him, yea, to be his *Love*, his *Dove*, his *Delight* for ever; and makes over *Himself* to the Soul, to be entirely its *own*, in an inviolable *Marriage Covenant*, that shall never, never be *broken*. — But oh the *Happiness* of that Soul, who is thus the LORD's, who hath thus the LORD for his *Portion*! Neither Men,

nor Angels can set it forth. It is far better experienc'd, than express'd, enjoy'd, than delineated. And in the most sweet Enjoyment of new Delights, shall the saved Ones increasingly *know*, how great, how ineffably great, their eternal *Happiness* in God the SAVIOUR is!

And unto you then, my dear Cousin *Elizabeth*, unto you in an especial Manner, who have *lost* your earthly Husband, let me say, Come *see* what a Husband *Jesus Christ* is! He ever *lives*, He ever *loves*, the Souls *espoused unto Him*. Oh little, little do you think, what a glorious *Husband* the SAVIOUR is, to miserable *Sinners*! What Beauties and Glories, what Grace and Love, what Wisdom and Power, what Riches and Honours, of an endless Duration, are in and with HIM! Are in and with Him for his *Bride*, to make *Her* truly *happy* in this World, and perfectly *glorious*, World without End! O come, *Taste and see how Good the LORD is!*

And may you all, my dear Cousins, most happily prove, how *far* the LORD our Maker, this heavenly Husband, this heavenly Lover, in his infinite Excellency, *exceeds* the best of earthly Husbands, of earthly Lovers; to your present *Joy*, and endless *Glory*! So prays

Yours Affectionately,

L E T T E R XLI. To Mr. N.

Dear Sir,

IT is well for you, that *Christ is precious*, desirable above all Things, to *your Soul*. Not the least Ray of the infinite Beauty and Glory of *Christ*, as the only

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Saviour, hath shined into the Heart of an *Unbeliever*. No ; the Soul that *sees the Glory of the LORD*, the Mediator, and the *Excellency of our GOD*, the Saviour ; So as to approve of Him, as God's Way of Salvation, and to cleave unto Him as such ; hath true, *precious Faith*. *The Faith of the Operation of God. Is passed from Death to Life, and shall not come into Condemnation*. The least Look of Faith to Christ, is Saving. Look unto ME, all ye Ends of the Earth : — is the Command. And, *Be ye saved* : — is the faithful Promise, the Royal Grant, that proceeding from the Heart of the Prince of Grace, is gone out of his Mouth, as a *God* that cannot *lie*, nor *repent*. — What think you of it, my dear Friend ? Do you look to Christ for Life ? And shall you indeed be *saved* by him ? Do you *experience* the one, and *believe* the other ? Or are you at a *Loss* about both ? If you are at a *Loss* ; what is the *Cause* of it ? Do you doubt the Truth of *your Faith*, or the Truth of *Christ's Promise* ? I easily think it is the former, if you doubt the latter as to yourself, as to your own Interest in, and Salvation by the Promise. But consider, If as convinc'd of your Sin-ruin'd and lost State by *Nature*, and your utter Inability to help or save *yourself*, by any Thing that *you can do* ; You look to *Christ* as the only and All sufficient Saviour, for *all Salvation*, from Sin and Misery, unto Holiness and Glory : This is the *Faith of God's Elect*. Of such, and of none but such, that were from the Beginning chosen in Christ unto Salvation ; and that are prepar'd by the Work of the Holy Ghost upon them in Time, for that Glory which was prepar'd for them before Time began. This is that *Faith* in *Jesus*, that *Looking* unto *Him* ; unto which the *Promise* of Life and Salvation in and by him, is inseparably *annexed*. Believe it then, my dear

dear Friend, that unto *you*, as a *Looker* unto *Christ* for *Life*, this *Promise*, this *Grant* of *Salvation*, *Be ye saved*: is made. It is *your* *Promise*, the *Grant* made to *you*, by the *Prince* of *Life* and *Love*, even to you in particular, as much as if your very *Name* was affix'd to it. And lo, *One* and *All the Promises of God*, are *yours* in *Christ*, are now and always, *Yea* and *Amen* in *Christ* unto *you*: To the *Glory of God* by you, in the present and future *World*! — Go on therefore, as a *Believer* in *Jesus*, by repeated, and stronger *Acts* of *Faith*, to *Believe on the Name of the Son of God* continually. And live joyfully as an *Heir of Promise*. For lo, *God's* *Promise of Life in Christ*, made to *you*, is a *free* *Promise*! That sought none of your *Worthiness*, for its *Foundation*; nor will fail towards you, because of your *Unworthiness*! It is a *full* *Promise*: That hath all *Supplies* in it, for your every *Want*! It is a *mighty* *Promise*: That is well able to bear the *Weight* of the *Whole* of your *Salvation*, from *Depths* of *Misery*, unto *Heights* of *Glory*! And lo, It is an *irreversible, unchangeable, eternal* *Promise*! It is not only that which *cannot* be reversed, which *cannot* be alter'd, which *cannot* end, as being made by a *God* of infinite *Faithfulness*, whose *Honour* obligeth him to be as good as his *Word*: But it is also, that which *God will not* reverse, alter, or put an *End* to, as being made by a *God* of infinite *Love*, who is of *one eternal Mind*, to be thus *gracious unto you*! He lov'd you of old, He loves you still, He will love you *Forever*! His *Love* towards you is free, great, unchangeable and eternal! The *Promise* is the *Expression* of *God's Heart*. And for the eternal *Glory* of his *Grace*, and for his *Heart's Delight*, in your eternal *Salvation*, as an *Object* of his eternal *Love*, He will *fulfil with his Hand*, what his *Mouth hath spoken*! — Fall down

therefore, my dear Brother, before the Majesty of the God of Grace, of the God of Promise! And believing in him, pour out your little Soul in *Love*, to that great HIM, who *first loved you!* And shew your Love, in having *Respect unto all his Commandments.*—So shall the Name of *Christ* be glorify'd in *you*, and your Joy and Peace in *Him* be abundant here; and your Glory *with Him* great hereafter.—*Grace be with you!* I am, Dear Sir,

Your Affectionate Friend and Servant,
In our most Precious JESUS,

L E T T E R XLII. To Mr. W.

My dear Brother,

YOURS I receiv'd, and rejoyce to hear of your Soul's Prosperity. I should have wrote before, but thro' much Weakness of Body have been hindred. Oh my dear Brother, *work while it is Day:* The *Night* of Affliction and Death *cometh*, wherein you can do *no more* to glorify Him that hath loved you, on this Earth. I bless the Lord, for enabling me, so weak, so vile a Worm, to do *any Thing* for Christ, while some Measure of Health and Strength was given me. I long now, to glorify my Lord, in the Weakness and Affliction I have long labour'd under: By *submitting* to his *holy Will*, by *kissing the Rod*, and by *loving* and *blessing Him* for *every Stroke*. I believe all my Lord's Dealings with Me, are in infinite Love, and shall be over-rul'd for his Glory, and my Advantage, present and eternal. Oh how great is our Privilege, that the LORD our *Shepherd*, our *Love*, our *Life*, is and will be *with us*, when we pass thro' the

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Valley of the Shadow of Death! The *bitter Waters* of Affliction and Death, are made *sweet*, so that we can comfortably *drink* of them, when our JESUS, that *Tree of Life*, that Mass of *Sweetness*, is cast into them. Since CHRIST is *ours*, all *Things* are *ours*: *Whether Life, or Death, Things present, or Things to come.* We have *All*, all *Things* as so many *Blessings*, in Him who bore the *Curse*, in Him who is our *ALL*. Our vast and endless Store of all *Blessings*, Joys and Glories, for Time and Eternity. What can that Soul *want*, that hath CHRIST the LORD for his *Portion*? Oh, *No good Thing!* Richly replenish'd is He, with the *Blessings of Life*, of Life for *Evermore*, in the LORD *his Life*; beyond the Conception of a Mortal's Thought, or the Expression of an Angel's Tongue! The wondring Angels, may say of such a Man, *O Man greatly beloved!* But can never cast up, or tell out, the *Riches* of that *Love*, wherewith such a Man is *blest*! No, the *Riches* of JEHOVAH's *Love*, of HIMSELF in Love, made ours in CHRIST, are *unsearchable*!

How happy then is an *Heir of God!* a *Joint-Heir with CHRIST!* And how joyful may he be, should he be, in his State by Grace, in every Change of Providence; all of which prepare him for the approaching State of his unchangeable and eternal Glory!—I rejoyce to think, we shall shortly meet in Heaven. To enjoy an everlasting Fellowship with each other, with all the Saints and Angels; and to be blest with the glorious and immediate Vision, of God and the LAMB: Where there is *Fulness of Joy*, and Rivers of *Pleasures for Evermore!* — *Great Grace be with you!*

Yours for Ever, most Affectionately,

In our sweet LORD JESUS,

L E T T E R XLIII. To Mr. L.

My dear, dear Brother,

WHAT, send a Letter, and Nothing in it ! It grieves me to serve you so ; but I han't Time now to write. JESUS your Lord, will not send you *blank Papers*. The *Letters of his Love* to your Soul, in the Promises and Declarations of Grace, apply'd to your Heart, have been, and shall be, all *full and glorious*. Oh how *much* doth CHRIST speak to us in a *Little* ! Oh how *Sweet*, how *exceeding Sweet* is *his Mouth* ! *His Lips are like Lilies, dropping sweet-smelling Myrrhe* !

“ His Mouth is most exceeding sweet,

“ All Sweetness, like an Hive.

“ One Word of His, like Honey is :

“ Oh how it doth revive ! ”

Go your Way, walk on in the *High Road* to Heaven, Thro' much Tribulation, rejoycing in Hope of the Glory of GOD ! JESUS loves you. That's enough. Your Life is in his Love, present and eternal ! Unto the tender Care, of your own dear, loving LORD, I commit you. And with a Heart that loves you much in HIM, I remain, dear Sir,

Yours in the sweetest Bonds,

L E T T E R XLIV. To Mr. M.

Dear Sir,

I Hope that your Soul prospers, altho', like the *Palm-Tree*, it should be under *pressing Weights*. We must have *Pressures*, of one Kind or other, to exercise our *Faith in Christ*, and *Love to Him*. To shew us our own *Insufficiency*, and the *All-sufficiency* of Christ: While *his Strength*, in supporting us under them, is made perfect in our *Weakness*. Which Way soever the Lord leads us, it is still right, a *right Way*, to the *City of Habitation*. Whatever He doth with us, He is always doing us Good. He is always loving us, in all his *Dispensations* towards us. Tho' He don't always *smile*; yet He always *loves*. He loves in *Frowns*, as well as in *Smiles*. His *Kindness* flows in *Rebukes*, as well as in *Embraces*. Our God, is always shewing forth, *The exceeding Riches of his Grace*, in *Kindness towards us thro' Christ Jesus*, in all the *Dispensations* of his *Providence*. Altho' his *Kindness* therein, is not always visible to our *Sight*. But what *we know not now*; we shall *know hereafter*.— And mean Time, we are called to *believe*, when we can't *see*: To adore, what we can't comprehend, of the deep, the glorious, the unsearchable *Ways of the LORD*, in his *Mercy and Truth* towards us. And good it is for us, both to *hope*, and *quietly wait for the Salvation of God*. For if He should cover us with thick *Darkness*; He will again *bring us forth to the Light*, and we shall *behold his Righteousness*.— Wishing all *Grace* may abound towards you, and the dear *Saints* with you: I am, dear Sir,

Your obliged affectionate Friend and
 Servant, in our precious LORD,

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L E T T E R XLV. To Mrs. C.

My dear Sister,

I Desire to leave all Things in the Hands of my infinitely Wise, and Gracious God. HE cares for *Me*: What need I anxiously care for *Myself*? Why should a Soul, that is interested in God, be perplex'd with Fear about any Events? *Not a Hair of our Heads can fall to the Ground, without our Father.* All Things in Providence, are wrought exactly correspondent to the Counsel of *Jehovah's Will*. And done in such an Infinity of Wisdom and Goodness, that Nothing could be *better* than it is; either for the Glory of God, or the Advantage of his People! What a Shame is it then, for those happy Souls, for whose *Good, all Things work together*; to quarrel with the glorious *Worker*? Or find Fault with his glorious *Work*? As we always do, when we are anxiously careful about, or displeased with, any Events. If the Lord *brings us thro' Fire, and thro' Water*, He will *bring us thence into a wealthy Place*. Out of the *Furnace*, we shall come, *as Gold that is Seven Times refined*. So that there is no Room for us to be uneasy at any Providence, with respect to our *own Good*. And if we regard the *Glory of God* in all; I am sure we have the highest Reason for a joyful Acquiescence with his All-wise Dispose. Oh, *Who* should love and adore, think and speak well of God, in *every Thing*, if his *Friends* do not? Oh that the Lord, would fill my *little Soul brimful of Love to Him*! Oh that He would grant me *Grace, to glorify Him*! And then, Let Him do with *Me*, as HE *pleaseth*. Surely I wou'd have *no Will*, but God's: *No Interest*, but *His*: *No Care,*

Care, but to advance *his Honour*. Oh my dear Sister, I long to love God. If you love me, pray, that my Love to God, may be a keen, solid, lasting *Flame*! That may nimbly run thro' all Opposition, lick up the Waters of Affliction, and ascending to Him from whence it came, join, like a *Tongue of Fire*, with *His infinite Flame*! We shall never be fully *happy*, till we are perfectly *One*, in and with God. In Him, by a Soul-satisfying *Enjoyment* of his infinite *Glories*. And with Him, by a perpetual and complacent *Flow*, of all the Powers of our Souls, into *His Will, Honour, and Interest*. The *Perfection* of this glorious *Bliss*, is reserved for the *Life to come*. But, blessed be God, it is *begun Here*. And the happy *Increase* of it, should be earnestly *sought for*, by the Favourites of Heaven, the Friends of God, continually.—That *the Love of God*, may be *shed abroad in your Heart*, more and more, *by the Holy Ghost*; and your Soul drawn thereby, to love him, who first loved you, is the sincere Desire of, my Dear Sister,

Yours in the Lord for Ever,

LETTER XLVI. To Mrs. A. and Mrs. G.

My Dear Sisters in Christ,

JESUS loves you: Believe it; and your Hearts will be full of Joy. Go on to rest your Souls, and the whole Weight of your Salvation, upon CHRIST, the Chief Corner-Stone, the Foundation which God has laid in Sion: And fear not. For you shall never perish, but have everlasting Life. The Rock of Ages, cannot sink beneath you. And unless CHRIST could fail, You

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that rest on HIM, cannot sink into Perdition. *Because Christ lives, you shall live also.* Oh, doubt it *not*. You cannot wound the Heart of Christ *more*, than by *Unbelief*. It is the Joy of his Soul, to see poor, needy, Hell-deserving Sinners, trust in Him, the Mighty SAVIOUR, and not be afraid. Oh stir not out of CHRIST, and the *Word of his Grace*, which he has given for *your Salvation*.—I am affectionately,

Yours in the Lord,

LETTER XLVII. To — —

My Dear and Honour'd Brother in Christ,

'TIS enough, Dear Sir, that your *Beloved* is yours, and that you are *His*. That the *Lord of all*, is your *God*. Your *Maker*, your *Husband*; and that *You* are *His*, in an inviolable, everlasting *Covenant*. Will you not cease your excessive Grief for the Loss of a *Creature*; which casts such Dishonour upon the *Lord* your *Creator*, upon *God*, your *Saviour*, as if HE, even HIMSELF, in his vast *Infinity*, was not enough to satisfy and solace, your little, scanty *Soul*! Be ashamed, practically to say, That *Christ*, with all his *Fulness*, is not for you, a *Soul satisfying Good*! If *Christ* was dead; you might grieve on, and refuse to be comforted. Your *Life*, your *Joy*, your *ALL* were gone! But, doth *Jesus live*, and live as your *Life*: And yet your Spirit sinks into *Sorrow* and *Death*! How incongruous a Thing is this! How unworthy of him, how unkind to him, as the *Lord your God*! Lovers, among finite *Souls*, find their greatest *Pleasure*, in being ardently loved again. And shall the *Lord*, your infinite *Lover*, who in infinite *Condescension*, to make you happy, calls

calls for your *Heart*; want the *Joy*, to see your *Soul* all-enflamed with *Love*, to his glorious, blissful *SELF*! O let the *Time past suffice*. Your *Beloved* is yours. Look upon his fair Face, till you are enamour'd with his ineffable Beauty! See Him in his transcendent Fairness, as the Christ of God; in his exceeding Fitness to your every Case; in his unsearchable Riches, his inexhaustible Fulness, for the rich Supply of your every Want; and see this altogether lovely Lord, in this endearing Relation, as *your Beloved*, as entirely and eternally *yours*: And then say, with Wonder, Love and Joy, *My Lord, and my God!* Thou, Lord, art fully and forever *mine*! And I, beloved of Thee, and resigning to Thee, am entirely and eternally *Thine*! You have *Christ's Heart*, Brother, you are his Love, his Dove, his fair One. Will you not give him *your Heart*, and say of Him, that matchless *HIM*, who is the Wonder, Love and Joy of Heaven and Earth! what in the Infinity of his Grace He speaks to you, *How fair, and how pleasant art Thou, O Love, for Delights!* Be content with your *Portion*, Brother, your wondrous *Lot*, in the *Christ of God*! Let Him be your *exceeding Joy*! Your Ever-living and exuberant *Joy*! Your Sorrow-absorbing *Joy*! And give your Lord the Pleasure, to see you *His Portion*, by way of *Resignation*, and to say of you, melted down into Submission and Acquiescence, into all Love and Obedience, *The Lines are fallen unto Me in pleasant Places; yea, I have a goodly Heritage.* — I know, Brother, *Influence* for this, must come from *Above*. If we want *Wisdom* and *Grace*, let us *ask of God*, who giveth *liberally*, and *upbraideth not*. Duty is *ours*; Supply of Grace for it, *God's*. Exhort one another to, and attempt our Duty, *we should*. And *God* therein and thereby, doth often *speak to our Hearts*, and *strengthen our weak Hands*. —

The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your Spirit!
 In Him, with affectionate Esteem, I am, Dear Sir,
Your sincere Friend and Servant,

LETTER XLVIII. To Mr. and Mrs. W.

Ever Dear and Honour'd Parents,

I Long to have my *Love to God*, a pure, keen, solid, lasting *Flame*: That in Spirit, Soul and Body I might be one continual living *Sacrifice* to his *Glory*. But oh, my *little Grace*, is so press'd and annoy'd with the *Body of Sin*, with the *Body of this Death*, that I *groan* being *burdened*. I rejoice in Hope of perfect Holiness, of immortal Glory. This was very sweet to me of late: That God has *predestinated me to be conformed to the Image of his Son*; that the Work is *His*; that He has *begun*, and will *perfect it*. This Glory, my Faith sees afar off; my Loves haltes to meet it; and my Hope patiently waits for it. — And the mean Time, what long I, what wait I for? Surely it is *This*: An increasing *Knowledge of CHRIST*, *Conformity to him*, and *Service of him*. Oh pray, that I may love my Dear Lord *greatly*, in every *little Thing* I aim to do for Him. And especially, now I have so *little Time* and *Strength* left me to serve Him in. An Eternity of Glory, in the Enjoyment of his glorious *SELF*, awaits me. But oh, that I have lov'd and serv'd him *so little*, in the Days of the Years of my Life, which He hath given me; this grieves me. I know my Lord, pardons all my Unkindness. — Oh that his forgiving Love, may bind me to greater Ingenuity and Duty!

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My dear and honour'd Parents, you are dear to God, and honour'd by Him. Oh may his Love, continually delight your Souls; and his Honour lie near your Hearts! He that has been your God from your *Youth up*; will be the *Stay and Staff* of your *Old Age*: And I trust, will make you fat and flourishing, even unto *hoar Hairs*. You have a God, whose *Love*, don't *decay*; whose *Mercy*, never *fails*; whose *Faithfulness*, is like the *great Mountains*; yea, firmer than the *lasting Hills*. *For the Mountains shall depart, and the Hills be removed: But God's Kindness towards you, shall not depart, nor the Covenant of his Peace be removed, saith the LORD, that bath Mercy on you.* Oh rest your dear Souls, your weary Heads, in the *sweet Bosom*, in the *kind Arms*, of the LORD your own GOD. There you'll find *Ease in Pain*, *Peace in Trouble*, *Security in Danger*, *Fulness in Want*, and *Life in Death*. Thro' Life, with all its Trials, and Death, with all its Sorrows, will the LORD your Life, your Joy, your ALL be *with you*. What then can you *want*? Oh, *no good Thing*! Nothing but what is to be found in GOD, even your own GOD! *Delight yourselves therefore in the LORD: And HE shall give you the Desires of your Heart.* — *The Good-Will of HIM that dwelt in the Bush, be with you.* I remain, my Dear and Honour'd Parents,

Yours with all Affection and Duty,

L E T T E R XLIX. To Mrs F.

Dear Madam,

YOU rejoice with me, for the Lord's Loving-kindness towards me. An Evidence this, That *You* also are one of the *Beloved of the Lord*. We know that we are passed from Death unto Life, because we love the Brethren. Not a Soul that rejoiceth in the Gladness of God's Nation; but is one that is remember'd with that Favour, which He beareth to his own People, and visited with his Salvation.

It gives me Joy, Madam, that you can say, "Whereas I was once blind, I now see: My lost State by Nature, and my Reconciliation thro' the Merits and Intercession of Christ." Amazing Change! Amazing Grace, that wrought it! *Alive from the Dead*, Madam: *Endless Life* is yours! *Risen with Christ*: It is to *die no more*! Your new, your spiritual Life, shall never die. The Spirit of Life from God, having quickned your dear Soul, abideth in you, as a Life-giving Flow, from Christ your living Head, to maintain, increase and perfect, his Begun-Work, till springing up, it rise to Life eternal. To a full Perfection; of Purity, Joy and Glory, in the Presence of God and of the Lamb: To an endless Duration; a blest Eternity! O Happy Soul! How vast is thine Inheritance! How rich art thou in Hope, as an Heir of God! And a Joint-Heir with CHRIST! So great a Portion, and so great a Security of its Possession: What a Greatness of Joy doth it bespeak, should it create, in every Expectant, of that ineffable Bliss! O dear Madam, This Portion is yours! This Portion is mine!

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As *seeing the Son*, and *believing on Him* ; we have *eternal-Life*. We have it ; let Satan and Unbelief say what they will to the *contrary*. They can never *undo*, what our Lord hath *done*. They can never, by their *Gainsayings*, make *null* and *void*, what the All-producing Word, of a God *that cannot lie*, hath *spoken*. And especially, as for our *strong Consolation*, His inviolable *Oath*, who hath sworn by his great SELF, is added to his great *Word*. Let us then as *Heirs of Promise*, as such that have *fled for Refuge*, to lay *Hold on Christ*, the *Hope set before us* ; receive the strong Consolation given us, the full and great Security, of our everlasting Salvation by JESUS. For, *Because He lives* ; we *shall live also*. Because He ever liveth, as our Intercessor, with his and our Father ; we shall be saved to the uttermost. *He that believeth on the Son of God, hath Life*. And this Life is *in his Son*. We have *Christ*, my dear Sister, and Life in HIM, who is *our Life*. Had we Life in its Fulness, by Way of Grant, and had we its Perfection, in Enjoyment : If we had it in our own *single Selves*, sepearate and apart from *Christ*, we *might*, we *should* lose it. Perfect *Adam*, standing upon his *own Bottom*, soon *fell* from his primitive Excellency, into unknown Depths of Misery. The glorious *Angels*, that stood *alone*, soon *reeled* out of Heaven to Hell : Top heavy with their Glory, down they sunk from their first Estate, into Depths of Woe, ineffably great and endless. But *redeemed Sinners*, unto *Life* by JESUS, being *new created* after his *Image* ; can *never lose* their Right to Life in its Completion ; nor the Begun Enjoyment of it given, as to the Principle of Life in their Souls, Because they have Life in *Christ* ; in HIM who ever liveth, to perfect and perpetuate, Life in *them*. To swallow up *Death*, in perfect, endless *Life*. To bear them up,

to the *Life of Glory*; and to sustain, or bear up, their *Glory-Life*, to a vast *Eternity*!

Come then, my dear Sister, Lie down and rest by *Faith*, in your own *Lord Jesus*. For, your *Beloved* is *yours*, Forever *yours*. And you are *His*, in an indissoluble *Union*, in an everlasting *Covenant*, that shall never be *broken*. And in Him you have *Life*, of the highest *Perfection*, *Life*, of an endless *Duration*. You have it, by an irreversible *Grant* in the Right of it; You have it in *Reversion*; You have it in the *First-Fruits* and *Earnest* thereof; And you shortly shall have it in *full Possession*. You have *Life* in *Christ*; A *Life* that cannot be *lost*. A *Fulness*, a *Redundancy*, a *Transcendency* of *Life*. And also a *Permanency*, an *Immortality* of *Life*. For *Life and Immortality*, are thus *brought to Light by the Gospel*. Your *JESUS*, is *Yesterday*, *To day*, and *Forever the same*. His *Love*, his *Life*, fixt on you, provided for you; know *no Change*, vary not with your *Frames*. Bless your *Lord* then, when he smiles; for He is yours in *Love*. Trust in Him when he frowns; for He is always yours, and always loves. Follow hard after him, when he hides and shides; He delights to see you *seek him, sorrowing*, as the *Dove* that has *lost its Mate*. And soon He will *see you again*, turn your *Sorrow into Joy*, and your *Joy* shall *no Man take from you*. — I commit you to the infinite *Love and Care*, of the *Lord your Life*: To be Bosom'd and Arm'd along by Him, thro' this weary *Wilderness*, into the *Land of Rest*: Where, blest with the endless *Vision* of *his*, and of his *Father's Face*, you will join in *Joy* with the *general Assembly* of *Saints and Angels*, to give him the eternal *Glory* of all his *Grace*. Wishing the best of *Blessings*: I subscribe, Dear Madam,

Your most obliged humble Servant
In our Precious Lord

L E T T E R L. To Mr. — —

My very dear Brother in the Lord,

HA V E you lost that *Comfort* and *Sweetness*, you once enjoy'd in *Christ*? You have not lost your *JESUS*; you have *Him* still, an entire and eternal *Interest* in his great and glorious *SELF*. And shortly your *Beloved* will *turn again*, and bless you with the Vision of his Face. He will be like a *Roe*, or a young *Hart* upon the Mountains of *Bether*, of *Division*. How great and many soever the Mountains of your Sins and Provocations may be, your *Beloved*, in the infinite Strength of his *Love*, will come *leaping* and *skipping* over them all, to bring renewed Salvation unto you. O my Brother, you are too *near* and *dear* to Christ, too nearly related to him, and too dearly bought, and affected by him, for Him to *leave*, or *forsake* you, to *disregard*, or *suffer* you to be *lost*. Your kind, tender, faithful *Shepherd*, in boundless Compassion, will gather you with his *Arm*, and carry you in his *Bosom*. Christ has an *Arm* for you still, the omnipotent Arm of his saving *Strength*, which well suits your great *Weakness*, by which he will gather you from all your Strayings. Are you like a *lost Sheep*? Your Shepherd will go *after you*, my Brother. He will as it were *leave* the *Ninety and Nine*, and go *after you*; He will *seek* till he has *found* you. And when he hath found you, He will lay you on his *Shoulder*, and bring you *Home rejoicing*: As if He had got some goodly Thing. For lo, He esteems you as his *Portion*; and says concerning you, *The Lines are fallen unto Me in pleasant Places, yea, I have a goodly Heritage*. Strange! That God our Saviour,

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should rejoyce over us *Sinners*, to save us from our *Sins*, our repeated, aggravated *Sins*, against his *saving Love*, notwithstanding all our Unworthiness and Provocations! But thus it is, because He is the LORD that *changeth not*: Because his Grace towards us, hath the Infinity, and Strength of the *Godhead* in it! And thence, you tender *Lamb* of Christ's Fold, your *Shepherd* hath a *Bosom* for you still. An Immensity and Eternity of unchanging *Love*, into which He will take you, manifestatively, and in which he will carry you sweetly, to your Soul's Refreshment, Life and Growth. *The LORD your God in the Midst of you is mighty; He will save, He will rejoyce over you with Joy; He will rest in his Love, He will joy over you with Singing.* The Lord your Lover, is in the *midst* of you still. He hath erected his *Throne* in your *Heart*, and there He will dwell *for ever*; for He hath *desired it*. He is *mighty*. Mighty to *save*; to bear all the Affronts you have given him, and the Indignities done to him; and to save you from the Guilt and Filth, Power and Being of all your Sins, and unto fresh Increases of Life spiritual, which shall spring and rise into Life eternal. Yea, He *will save*. He will *rest* in his Love. He will never seek another *Object*, instead of *you*, nor cast you *off*, or *out* of his infinite Complacence, for *all that you have done*. He will rejoyce over you with *Joy*, with *exceeding great Joy*; yea, with *Singing*. Such is the Infinity of his *Heart's Delight* in *you*! He will be *silent* because of his *Love*. He will lay none of your Sins to your *Charge*. He *dy'd* to set you *free*. And were there Need, He would die *again*, rather than leave you under the Power of *Sin*, to be lost in endless *Death*. — Come then, my Brother, prostrate your guilty, filthy, diseased Soul, before the Lord your Lover. He will not condemn you, but speak Peace and Par-
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don to you, and thereby put Strength into you, and most graciously will He receive you as his own. *They say, If a Man put away his Wife, and she go from him and become another Man's, shall he return unto her again? Shall not that Land be greatly polluted? But thou hast played the Harlot with many Lovers, yet return again unto Me, saith the LORD.—I will not cause mine Anger to fall upon you, for I am merciful, saith the LORD.* O my Brother, you are, you shall be, under forgiving Love. Grace and Peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ, by the Holy Ghost the Comforter, for your renewed Joy and increasing Holiness, unto perfect Purity and endless Glory, are and shall be multiply'd unto you. And this because you stand in Grace, have an unchangeable and eternal Fixation in Grace: Which in the Exuberance of its infinite Fulness and Freeness, will flow out upon you to your full and endless Joy, thro' Time and to Eternity.

And doubt not your State in Grace, because you see not your Increase in Grace, yea, tho' you see but little Grace in you. Know you not that fruitful Trees, young, thriving, growing Plants, have their Autumn, and Winter Times, as well as their Spring, and Summer Seasons: Wherein they are disrobed of their Fruit, yea, stripp'd of their very Leaves? And yet, even at such Times, they are living, fruitful, growing Trees, tho' stripp'd of the Glory of their Fruit, and of their leafy Greenness. Even so are you, my Brother, tho' now it's Autumn, and Winter with you, a Tree of Righteousness, a fruitful, growing Tree, the Planting of the LORD by Grace, that He might be glorify'd. And the Sun-like Face of your glorious Lord, in the next Spring of his infinite Favour, will look you again into a fresh Beauty and Glory, will

clothe you afresh with an increasing Greenness, and more abundant Fruitfulness. And when you don't grow *upwards*, you grow *downwards*, take deeper Root by Faith into Christ, and are more grounded in Humility, by the Experience you have of Self-Nothingness and Wretchedness. And by the condensing Cold of Winter-Dispensations, the Lord prepares you for a greater Flow of Sap, when He makes his next Approach as your Summer-Sun, with *Healing in his Wings*, with his warm and quickning Rays, to exhale your Graces into precious Fruits, to your more abundant Joy in Him, and to his more abundant Praise by you.

My kind Lord sweetly supports and comforts me, and enables me to glorify him under this *great Trial*, of the *Loss* of my *dear Yoke-fellow*. Blessed for ever be his great, dear Name, He hath done all Things *well*; so well, that nothing could be *better* than it is! He is *mine* in this *Affliction*, and I see and receive it as a *Gift* of his infinite *Love*. And I am *His* in it, I love, adore and bless him, and as it were forget my *Pain*, in the *Pleasure*, while I count *his Glory*, my *chief Joy*. — *The Grace of Christ be with your Spirit!* In his Bowels, my dear Brother, I am,

Yours most Tenderly,

L E T T E R L I. To ———

My very dear and much honour'd Brother,

WHEN we parted, "Upon your speaking of the Lord's Dealing, in taking dearest Relatives *from*, whose Lives are bound up *in*, each other; while those whose Love to one another hath not those

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Ardours, are permitted to live together :" I tho't of what Dr. Goodwin says, " The Lord delights to try us in our *Isaacs.*" Else, Brother, He would not have a *Proof* of our choicest Love. O how did it delight the Heart of God, to see *Abraham* so chearfully resign his *Isaac* ! Now (says he) *I know that thou fearest God ; seeing thou hast not withheld thy Son, thine only Son, from ME.* And what *Blessings* came down upon *Abraham*, as a *Reward* of this Part of Obedience ! By Myself have I sworn, saith the LORD : *That in Blessing I will bless thee ; and in Multiplying I will multiply thee.* — Our Lord, is an immense Lover, and intensely delights in our Love, weak as it is, when we give him cheerfully, our dearest Enjoyments at his Bidding. — Hence, Brother, whenever your late Trial returns upon your Spirit, leaning on the Strength of Jesus by Faith, attempt your Duty to him in Love : To make renewed Resignations, with increasing *Cheerfulness*, of what his dear Hand, call'd for from yours. It will delight your Lord's Heart, and bless you he will, like HIMSELF. Give him your Pence ; He will give you Pounds. Bless him that he hath given you an Opportunity, to give him any Thing so dear unto you ; and thus to shew your Love to the Lord your matchless Lover ! For, To glorify, and enjoy Him : is the chief End of your Being : In Nature, and in Grace, will be to your endless Glory ! — That the Joy of the Lord may be your Strength ; and your Feet made like the Feet of Hinds ; in doing and suffering the Will of God, until you inherit the Promises : is the hearty Desire and Prayer of, dear Sir,

Your most affectionate and obliged
Friend and Servant in the Lord,

L E T T E R LII. To Mr. F.

Dear Sir,

I Heartily thank you for your last kind Letter. The Lord by it refresh'd my Soul, made me glad in Himself, and excited my Heart to praise him. O what *Grace* is this to *me*, that my poor *Books* should be made of *Use* to *you*, and to *other Souls*! To the *Lord alone*, be the *whole Glory*! Glad am I, Brother, that you will help a weak Worm, to serve the Lord I love, by your *Prayers* for a Blessing on me, and on my weak Attempts to feed the tender Lambs, of the Lord our great Shepherd. The Lord *hear* your Prayers for *me*, and *return them* an Hundred-fold, into your *own Bosom*! Well, O how well is it for us, that JESUS our *Shepherd*, hath us all, in his own Almighty and All gracious *Hand*!—You write, Brother, of the *Lion of Hell*, who goeth about, *seeking* whom he may *devour*; and sweetly bless God, that there is a *Remnant* according to the *Election of Grace*, that are put forever out of his *Reach*, out of the Reach of *final Apostasy*, under the Influence of that wicked *apostate Spirit*.—And is this *your* happy *Lot*! And is it *mine*! O let us *adore the Grace* that hath *saved us*! The rich, free, distinguishing *Grace*, that hath made *us* the Subjects of its glorious Reign, unto eternal *Life*, while *Thousands* round about us, are left under the Reign of Sin and Satan, to perish in endless *Death*! In Heart, in Lip, in Life, let us praise the Grace of *Ransom*! The Grace of *Rescue*! How great, how unsearchable are its *Wonders*! Wou'd the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, display the exceeding Riches of *his Grace*, in giving his only-begotten Son, to obey and die

die for us Sinners, the Chief of Sinners, to save us from all Misery, and unto all Glory! Wou'd the eternal Son of God, to shew *his* boundless, matchless *Grace*, condescend to take our low Nature, and in it stoop, to take our Law-place, to bear our Sin, to be made our Curse, and to die the Death of the Cross, in our Room and Stead, to exalt us, unto his Throne of Glory! And wou'd the eternal Spirit, the Lord the Holy Ghost, in *his* unbounded *Grace*, come down into such Hearts as ours, take Possession of them for Christ, erect his Throne there, cast out Satan, and subdue Sin; and thus by *his* Almighty Energy, begin and resolve to perfect, our Deliverance from Hellish Slavery, and unto Heavenly Liberty, the *glorious Liberty of the Sons of God!* Praise to the *Father*, to the *Son*, to the *Holy Ghost*, to the *Three-One God*, the *God of all Grace*, who hath thus *ransom'd*, who hath thus *rescu'd* the *Vessels of Mercy*, even us who are *call'd by Grace* unto *eternal Glory!*

I was much pleas'd with what you hinted of Mr. B.'s Discourse from *Psf. 23. 4.* "That the Valley of the Shadow of Death, is the last Walk of a Believer. That he doth not stay, much less dwell there. And that this Walk leads a Believer unto the Presence-Chamber, the upper Court of King Jesus: To dwell for ever with the Lord; where the Wicked cease from troubling, and the Weary are at Rest. — And as a dear Servant of Christ, lately said, (preaching from *Gen. 46. 4.* *I will go down with thee into Egypt, and Joseph shall put his Hand upon thine Eyes*) "That the Lord will go down with his People, into the dark Valley of the Shadow of Death:" Why then should we fear to enter upon this our last Walk? Since the *Lord* our *Light*, is and will be *with us*; the *dark Valley* shall be made safe and
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pleasant to us. In this lonely Walk, we shall have the choicest Company. When Christian Friends must leave us, or we rather, take Leave of them; Christ, our best Friend, will instantly and surpassingly take their Place. And by *his Light*, how safely, how joyfully, shall we *walk thro' Darknes!* The Rays of his Grace, the Shines of his Face, will make the *Darkness, Light about us.* And O! to have the *Lord* our *Life*, with us in *Death*, to *swallow up Death in Victory*: How great must be a Believer's Triumph in, and over *Death!* And beyond it, how great his *Glory!* — Let us come up therefore from the *Wilderness*, even to the last Step of it, *leaning upon our Beloved.* And the very worst to Nature, shall be best of all to Grace, and bring us to the immediate, blissful, endless Vision of our Redeemer's Face! To *see him as he is*, to *behold*, to enjoy *his Glory*, to a blest *Eternity!* — I rejoice in your Soul's Prosperity, for that Savour and Relish of the Things of God, and I trust, Growth in the Knowledge of Christ, (for which I have pray'd, and) with which you are favoured. And, *That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Glory, may give unto you* (still greater Measures of) *the Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation in the Knowledge of Him*: To your growing Joy, and increasing Conformity, until you are blest with immortal Glory; is the hearty Desire of, dear Sir,

Your affectionate Friend and Servant,

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L E T T E R L I I I .

To Mr. A.

My very dear Brother in our precious Lord,

I Thank you for your Sympathy with me in my present Affliction, and take it most kindly. Indeed my *Loss*, by the *Death* of my dear *Yoke-fellow*, is very great. But since I have not lost my *Jesus*, since *God* hath given me his *Son*, my Spirit is sweetly reconcil'd to the *Divine Will*; and delighted I am in my *Lord*, as my present and eternal *ALL*. *He* bears me, and my *Burden* too: And being well supported, I *sink not*. Being well supply'd with spirituous *Cordials*, my Heart *faints not*. At Times, under pressing Weights, the *Archers* that hate me, *shoot at me*, and *sorely grieve me*: But my *Bow abides in Strength*, and the *Arms of my Hands are made strong by the Hands of the mighty God of Jacob*. My weak Soul hath been enabled in some Measure, to *glorify the LORD in the Fires*: To esteem *his Glory*, my *chief Joy*; and my Trial, a happy Mean, to that blessed End. I call my Trial a *happy Mean*; not that it is not *grieving and afflicting in Itself*: But the *bitter Waters* of Affliction, being well *sweetned* by my *Lord*, the *Tree of Life*, who is cast therein, I can *freely drink them*. While I view the present Trial, given me by infinite Wisdom and Grace, as an Opportunity to *give Glory to God*, such a Glory, as I could not *otherwise* have given him; methinks the *Bitter* of it, is lost in the *Sweet*, and well it is *relish'd* by my *spiritual Palate*: Thus kindly my dear Lord deals with me, his poor, vile, ungrateful Worm! Help me to praise him, and remember me in your Prayers.

I rejoice with you, my dear Brother, for the bright Displays of Christ's Love, with which you are highly favoured, and its All attracting Influence, of which you have the sweet Experience. An invaluable Blessing is the Love of Christ in Itself; and the Manifestation thereof an unspeakable Privilege. And blest be the Lord our Lover, our cold, dull Hearts, shan't be always in this dead, lifeless Frame. But enkindled with his infinite Love, and chang'd in our Creature-Measure into its Image, our whole Souls shall ascend as a pure Flame in fervent Praises, to his endless Glory. How miserable should we be, tho' the Objects of *Christ's Love*, if we were not by *Him* to be *loved into Love*? Alas, our *carnal Mind*, which is *Enmity* against *Him*, sinks us into *Death*. And nothing less than the *Love of Christ*, display'd and apply'd, by the irradiating, comforting Influence of the *Holy Ghost*, can make us *spiritual*, can raise our Hearts to *love the Lord*, which is the *Life* of our Souls. But as *our Life*, was the *End of Christ's Death*, the glorious *End* which his Love had in *View*, in giving Himself for us; So this is and shall be the blessed *Effect*, of that great *Cause*. Our dear Lord *loved us*, and *gave Himself for us*, that we *in Love* might *give ourselves to Him*; that we might live and love, love and live forever. And since an infinite Price hath been paid, and an infinite Power is engag'd for our complete Redemption, from all Misery, to all Glory; we shall shortly, *love Christ* as we *would*: With all our Powers, in perfect Service, unto endless Ages. O the *Glory*, of that *State*, when *Christ* and we shall be *one in Love*! When there shall be no Disunion of Hearts, nor Want of Communion between us! *Christ's Heart*, is never disunited from *us now*; but O how often are *ours* from *Him*! How little a *Part* hath *Christ* of *our Hearts*? And that little Part
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which he hath, how oft is it interrupted in its Flows of Love to HIM, the *Sum* of all Perfections and Delights, while our Souls are diverted by mere *Shadows* of Joys, into real Sorrows? Thus it is with us in this State of Distance and Imperfection. But when we are made perfect in Love, and at Home with Christ, no Disunion, nor Want of Communion shall be between us. We shall be fitted for the highest Communications from Christ, and abide for ever in his immediate Presence. Our Lord will not then *hide Himself* from his *own Flesh*, nor shall we wander after *other Lovers*. But under the ceaseless *Flows*, and endless *Shine* of infinite Love, we, to the utmost of our finite Capacity, shall love again; with our *whole Heart, Soul and Strength*, or *we*, with all our Powers and Faculties, shall *haste* as a swift *Stream*, into Love's *Ocean*, and *unite* as a bright *Beam* with the *Body of the Sun*. The Lord God and the *Lamb*, shall be our *Light and Life*, our *Joy and Glory*, to a blest *Eternity*.

And for this happy State, my dear Brother, the Lord is now preparing you. Those vast *Desires* which are wrought in your Heart, after increasing and perfect Love to Christ, under the glorious *Shine* of his infinite Love; are your *Preparation by Grace*, for that *ineffable Glory*; and the very *Bud* of that open, unfadable *Flower*. The Lord *increase* you more and more, in Love to Him and His, and towards all Men: To the End He may *stablish* your Heart unblameable in *Holiness*, at the Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his Saints! So prays, my Dear Brother,

Yours most affectionately in our Lord the Lamb,

L E T T E R L I V . T o — —

My very Dear Sister in Christ,

I Heartily thank you for your kind Letter. Blest be our dear Lord, for his great Kindness to you, and to unworthy me, that still, still, Goodness and Mercy follow us ; and follow us they shall, till waisted into the Ocean of Joy and Glory : To know, and love, and serve the Lord, in the Heights of Bliss, to a blest Eternity ! What manner of Love is it, that while we are in the Wilderness, our Lord cares for us ! Forgives our Sins, heals our Diseases, and supplies all our Wants ! Feeds us with heavenly Manna, follows us with the Water of Life, clothes us with the Everlasting Robe, sustains us under pressing Weights, and out of Weakness, makes us strong ! So that from blest Experience we can say, *We know that all Things work together for Good, to them that love God, to them that are the Called according to his Purpose.* — You say, my dear Sister, “ There is that in Affliction, that makes the “ Heart rejoice.” This same *That*, which you speak of, is GOD. It is GOD that makes Affliction joyful to his People. If GOD is with us sensibly in Affliction, sustains us under it, and enables us to glorify Him by it ; our Hearts are exceeding joyful, when compass’d about with Sorrows. But if GOD withdraws, our Spirits sink, fail and die instantly. — And the richest Enjoyments, are not sufficient to hold our Souls in Life ; if our *Beloved* withdraws, ere we aware, we fall asleep. As is clear by the Verse preceding those, on which you desire my Thoughts, as it stands connected with them. *viz.*

Song

Song v. 1, 2, 3, 4. *I am come into my Garden, my Sister, my Spouse; I have gathered my Myrrh with my Spice, I have eaten my Honeycomb with my Honey, I have drunk my Wine with my Milk: Eat, O Friends, drink, yea, drink abundantly, O Beloved.*

I sleep, but my Heart waketh: it is the Voice of my Beloved that knocketh, saying, Open to me, my Sister, my Love, my Dove, my Undeiled: for my Head is filled with Dew, and my Locks with the Drops of the Night.

I have put off my Coat, how shall I put it on? I have washed my Feet, how shall I defile them?

My Beloved put in his Hand by the Hole of the Door, and my Bowels were moved for him.

Various are the Senses, that these Words may bear, and the Times and Cases, in which they are applicable to the People of God, the Spouse of Jesus. From the first of these Verses, with the Beginning of the second, we see what I have hinted, That the richest Enjoyments, are not sufficient to hold our Souls in Life, or lively for God. Tho' the Spouse's Beloved in answer to her Request, was *come into his Garden, had gather'd his Myrrh with his Spice, had eaten his Honeycomb with his Honey, had drank his Wine with his Milk*, and made a Feast for his Favourites, saying, *Eat, O Friends, drink, yea, drink abundantly, O Beloved*: Yet the very next we hear from Her is, *I sleep*. Which shews what Danger we are in of carnal Security, after we have been favoured highly: And that nothing less than renewed, and continual Influence from Christ our Life, can keep us alive for God.

Passing the various Senses, and divers Cases in which the Words you would have me write of, may be apply'd to us, I shall give a Hint only concerning One, which has lately been of Use to me.

And

And thus the *first* of these Verses, with the gracious Declarations and Invitations therein, which appears to be an Answer of Prayer: May respect those bright Displays of Divine Favour, which our Lord makes to his People thro' the *Promises*, in answer to their *Requests* for *desired Mercies*. *I am come*, &c. Which may denote, 1. The *Existence* of pray'd-for Mercies, in the *Promise*. As, *I am returned to Jerusalem with Mercies*: seems to be much the same with, *My House shall be built in it*, Zech. i. 16. And 2. The real *Presence* of promis'd Mercies to *Faith*. As, *Faith is the Substance of Things hoped for, and the Evidence of Things not seen*, Heb. xi. 1. — Again, Our Lord's *Feasting* upon the *Fruits* of his *Garden*, may respect that *Delight* which He takes in the vigorous Exercise of his *Peoples Graces*, while they seek him under the quickening Influences of the *Spirit of Grace and of Supplications*. Which in one Sense may be signify'd by those Words, Song iv. 6. *Until the Day break, and the Shadows flee away, I will get me to the Mountain of Myrrh, and to the Hill of Frankincense: i. e. To Mount Sion, the Church, where Prayers and Praises are offered, which are most sweet, and refreshing unto ME.* It is as if our Lord should say, ' Until I and ' my Spouse meet, in the Joys of *Glory's Day*; I will ' dwell with her, in her *gracious State*, and delight ' *myself* with the Fruits of *my Spirit* in her Heart and ' *Life*.' — And the *Feast*, that our Lord makes for his *Favourites*, saying, *Eat, O Friends, &c.* may respect that *Fulness of Gospel-Provisions*, which is in *Himself*, and which he invites them to partake of, while He shews Himself to his *Church*, and to particular *Believers*, in the immense Glories of his Person, and in the delightful Wonders of his *Atchievements*, or what He hath done, doth, and will do for his People,

ple, according to the Declarations and Promises of his Grace concerning them. As *Isa. xxv. 6, &c. And in this Mountain will the LORD of Host make unto all People a Feast of fat Things, a Feast of Wines on the Lees, of fat Things full of Marrow, of Wines on the Lees well refined. And he, &c. And O what a marrowy Feast, what a delightful Banquet, doth a Believer sometimes enjoy thro' an applied Promise, of a pray'd-for Mercy! — But by and by, Providence frowns, the Soul sinks into Discouragement! and then, with the Spouse, says,*

I sleep: — That is, The Vigour of my Graces, Faith, Hope and Joy, is abated. It is as if the Spouse should say, ' I am like a Person half dead: my spiritual Senses, are bound up, and restrained.' In this sad Case, Unbelief prevails; which inclines the Soul to depart from God, to grow dull in its Expectations of him, and sluggish in its Supplications to him. — But yet at Ease, the Soul is not, cannot be, without the sought-for, promis'd Mercy. My Heart waketh: — i. e. some Desires are maintain'd and reviv'd in me, by the fresh Intimations thereof which the Lord gives me. It is the Voice of my Beloved that knocketh, saying, Open to Me, my Sister, my Love, my Dove, my Undeiled: — As if she should say, ' I know my Beloved's Voice, He speaks like Himself, with his endearing Language, ' He calls me to come forth by Faith, and let him in, ' that He may have a little Communion with me about ' his promis'd Grace.' " For, (He says) my Head is " filled with Dew, and my Locks with the Drops of the " Night." That is, ' By thy Unbelief, thou reproachest my Government, as if I took no Notice of ' the Petitions of my Subjects; and thus thou castest inclement, grieving Drops of Shame, upon my kind ' Thoughts, my faithful Promises, according to my ' gracious

‘ gracious *Purposes* concerning thee ; in this *Night*,
 ‘ while my Face in *Providence*, doth not shine upon
 ‘ thee, but thick *Darkness* covers thee.’ — Doth
 all this prevail with the *Spouse* to open to her *Beloved*?
 Ah! no. She replies,

*I have put off my Coat, how shall I put it on? I have
 washed my Feet, how shall I defile them?* q. d. ‘ I am
 ‘ indispos’d to Acts of Faith, and sink in Discourage-
 ‘ ment. If I was my Lord’s Favourite; would Things be
 ‘ thus with me? How shall I again set my Feet in the
 ‘ Way of Faith, wherein I meet with so much Diffi-
 ‘ culty?’ Oh, ungrateful Answer, she gave to her
 Lord’s kind Call! — But doth He leave her in this sad
 Case? No, no. She says,

*My Beloved put in his Hand by the Hole of the Door,
 and my Bowels were moved for him. —* He touch’d
 her Heart afresh, by the Power of his Holy Spirit,
 thro’ the Word of his Grace: And her Bowels were
 moved for him. She was grieved with her Unbelief
 and Hardness of Heart, whereby She had shew’d such
 Unkindness to her dear Lord, and cast such Dishonour
 upon him. And quickned She was to an holy Resolu-
 tion, to rise up in Faith, to open to her Beloved, what-
 ever Difficulties She might meet with in Providence,
 before She enjoy’d the blessed Fruit of the Promise. —
 But did She meet him instantly? Ah! no. As,

Ver. 5, 6. *I rose up to open to my Beloved, and my
 Hands dropped with Myrrh, and my Fingers with sweet-
 smelling Myrrh, upon the Handles of the Lock. I opened
 to my Beloved, but my Beloved had withdrawn Himself,
 and was gone: My Soul failed when he spake: I sought
 him, but I could not find him; I called him, but He gave
 me no Answer. —* Here, Her Beloved had pour’d so
 much of the Oil of his Spirit and Grace upon her un-
 believing Heart, thro’ some Promise or other sweetly
 apply’d,

apply'd, that her *Hands* of Faith *dropped* with *Myrrh*, and her *Fingers* with *sweet smelling Myrrh*, which He had left upon the *Handles of the Lock*; and which exceedingly delighted her spiritual Sense. — But when She *opened* to her Beloved, and thought to let Him in, his *Promise* and the *Fulfilment* of it together: (For when our Faith is reviv'd in the Promise, we are apt straightway to expect the Accomplishment of it.) Alas! Her Beloved had *withdrawn Himself*, and was gone! She could not have that *Communion* with him in *promis'd Grace*, that She had *sighted*, nor see him in the *Performance* of the *Promise*, as She *wished*. Her Soul *failed when He spake*: In the Remembrance of his kind Words, of his gracious Call, She was *grieved* in the very *Inward* of her Soul, for her *Unkindness* towards him, and the *Dishonour* She had done him by her Unbelief, and ready to *fail* under his *Withdraw*, as a just *Rebuke*. She *sought him*, but She could not *find him*, She *called him*, but he gave her *no Answer*. — This, Ah! This, is the *Fruit* of our Unbelief. Our Lord *did not many mighty Works there*, (it is said) *because of their Unbelief*, Mat. xiii. 58. — But Mercy it was to the Spouse, that She was thus *quicken'd* and *strengthen'd in Faith*, to *open* to her Beloved, to *seek*, and *call* after him; tho' as a *Rebuke* for her Unbelief, and a further *Trial* of her Faith, He was not instantly *found* of her, He gave her *no Answer*. — But what *becomes* of this forsaken Spouse? Has her Beloved *forgotten to be gracious*? Is his *Mercy clean gone*? Will he be *favourable no more*? Doth his *Promise fail for Evermore*? No, no: See the *Outbreakings* of his infinite Love, the *Triumphs* of his *Grace*, *Truth* and *Faithfulness*.

Chap. vi. 4, &c. *Thou art beautiful, O my Love, as Tirzah, comely as Jerusalem, terrible as an Army with Banners. Turn away thine Eyes from me, for they have*

overcome me: &c. — O strange! Is this the Voice of the Church's Beloved, to his ungrateful Spouse, who had forc'd him from her, by her Unbelief! O unparallel'd Grace! Knowledge-passing Love! Who is a strong LORD like unto Him, and to his Faithfulness round about him! What, was She his Love still, the Object of his ineffable Delight! And thro' his own Beauties imputed and imparted, was She still esteemed and declared, to be beautiful in his Eye! What, beautiful as Tirzah, comely as Jerusalem, acceptable, and desireable as a Royal City, the City of Peace, for the King of Glory to dwell in! And tho' She had been so weak in Faith; yet declar'd to be of such majestick Might, as to be terrible (unto all his, and her Enemies,) as an Army with Banners! And tho' She had look'd upon her altogether-lovely Lord, with such Coldness and Disregard, could He, did He say to her still, Turn away thine Eyes from Me, for they have overcome Me! &c. What, delighted, captivated, overcome by a Look from Her, who but little before, by her unkind Looks, had oblig'd him to forsake her! Did He not remember her ungrateful Treatment, and deal with her according to her Deserts? No; In strict Justice, in vindictive Wrath, He remember'd her Sins no more! And even his Bridegroom-Displeasure, endur'd but for a Moment! She was too near and dear to Him, to be forsaken, or forgotten. He saw her upon the Search for her Beloved, as quickned by his own Love; and instantly gives Vent to the Grace of his Heart, to an Imensity of unchanging Love, that was to run an endless Round, to a boundless Eternity; and satisfies the Desires of her Heart, in blessing her afresh with the Vision of his Face, the Raptures of his Voice, and the Wonders wrought by his gracious Presence, and bright Appearance: Till full with Blessing, She exults in his Praise,

Praise, *I am my Beloved's, and his Desire is towards me : I am a Wall, and my Breasts like Towers : Then was I in his Eyes as one that found Favour !* Ch. vii. 10. and viii. 10.

Hence then, my dear Sister, let us learn :

1. That whenever we are favour'd with *applied Promises*, of *pray'd-for Mercies*, and blest with the Life-giving Presence of our *Beloved* therein ; we ought to beware of being *lifted up* with our own *Liveliness*, and *dependent* upon *inherent Grace* : Lest suddenly by sad Experience we are oblig'd to say, *I sleep !*

2. Whenever our Lord gives us *Promises* of *desired Mercies* ; let us beware of *Limiting Him*, as to *Ways* and *Times* of their *Performance* : As when we draw out these for *ourselves*, and the Wisdom of Providence *crosseth* our Expectations ; we are thence easily beset with *Unbelief*, as to the *Performance* of the Promise.

3. When in such a Case, our dear Beloved gives us *fresh Promises*, and calls us to *open* unto Him by Faith, that He may bless us with sweet Communion with him in his promis'd Grace ; O let us beware of making *Excuses*, of yielding to unbelieving *Indolence* : Whereby we give such *Displeasure* to our great Lord, and cast such *Dishonour* upon him, yea, and even *provoke him* to *withdraw* his comforting Influence from us, and *suspend* his wonderful Appearances for us.

4. When we have thus *griev'd* and *dishonour'd* our best Friend ; let us *grieve* for his Dishonour by our Unbelief, and *rise up* in Faith, to *open* to our *Beloved*, by an hearty *Belief* of his *Promise*, a firm *Expectation* of its *Performance*, and an entire *Resignation* of the *Way* and *Time* of it, to his infinite *Wisdom* and *Goodness*. And

5. If our Beloved for a *While*, should be *withdrawn*, and *gone* from us ; let us not sink into Discouragement,

as if He would *no more* appear to us, nor for us, but meekly *kiss* the Rod, and patiently and earnestly *wait his Return*; For, *He will see us again, and our Hearts shall rejoyce, and our Joy no Man shall take from us*.

Wishing you the Joys of your Bridegroom's Favour, the full Joys that are in his Presence, the Beauties, in the Duties, of Holiness to Him your LORD; and the Glories of his wonderful Appearances for you in Providence, according to his exceeding great and precious Promises: Till the Joy of Vision takes place of Faith, and you shall see, and say, *There hath not failed ought, of any of the good Words which the LORD hath spoken*: To your ineffable Bliss, and his endless Praise: I am, my Dear Sister,

Yours most affectionately in our Welbeloved,

LETTER LV. To Mrs. K.

My Dear Friend,

THE Death of your Honour'd Father, is doubtless to you, a very great Loss; your own desolate Case, an additional Distress; and the great Affliction which abides one of your near Relatives; with the Concern of all, that affects another: makes your present Condition a State of Trouble. But JESUS lives, to *save them to the uttermost, that come unto God by Him*. *It hath pleased the Father that in HIM should all Fulness dwell*. Hark! All Fulness dwells in CHRIST: abides in HIM, for the full Supply of all His, thro' Time and to Eternity. When *Cisterns* of Creature-Comforts are *broken*, and fail our thirsty Souls; the LORD, the Creator of all our Bliss, who is our Bliss,

as the *Fountain of living Waters*, is as full, free, and overflowing as ever: To satisfy and solace us, in all our Desires and Grievs. Come, my dear Friend, put CHRIST for a *Well*, while passing thro' *Baca's Vale*: And you shall not want any good Thing. How can you want any Thing; if you have HIM who hath all Things, who is all Things, and who is and will be ALL unto you? *Delight thyself in the LORD: and He shall give thee the Desires of thine Heart.* In CHRIST there is a *Fulness of all Relation*, and a *Fulness for all Salvation*; to give us all Joys, and to deliver us from all Grievs. The LORD hath his Way (in Mercy to his own) in the Storm, and in the Whirlwind; and the Clouds are the Dust of his Feet: The Forerunners and Tokens of his approaching Presence, for his People's Deliverance. For when He hath tried us, we shall come forth as Gold. Our Trials are needful, to purge away our Dross, to brighten our Graces, and to prepare us for future Glory. They are given us as subservient Means, to those blessed Ends. And that same infinite Grace, which bestows them, effectually overrules them, into a Subserviency to its glorious Designs: For its endless Praise, and our immortal Joys. And the Lord that gives us Trouble, gives Himself in it, with it, to his People; and thereby, abundant Peace, in much Tribulation. In the World, (our Lord says) ye shall have Tribulation: in ME Peace: Be of good Cheer, I have overcome the World. Our dear Lord, hath gone thro' Troubles before us, to overcome them for us, to take away the Curse, and make them Blessings to us. And He goes thro' Troubles with us, and doth and will overcome them in and by us: Or, make us more than Conquerors, thro' Him that loved us. Thro' much Tribulation: is the High Road to the Kingdom. But having such a Companion in Trouble, as the

Lord

Lord our Lover, the Lord our Saviour, a Friend that loveth at all Times, a Brother born for Adversity; Yea, a Friend, in infinite Grace, that sticketh closer than a Brother, in Nature; who is given of God our Father, to be our glorious Leader: Let us not fear a safe and joyful Passage, thro' the most dangerous, thorny Way, nor a blissful End, of the most rugged Path. Afflictions are not the Saints Abiding-Places; but blessed Path ways, to their prepared Mansions of eternal Glory.

Thus our dear Friend and your honour'd Father, was sweetly conducted by the *Captain of his Salvation*, thro' his late appointed *Troubles*, to his everlasting *Rest*. The *Son* hath made him *free*: and He is *free indeed!* From Sin and Sorrow, of every Kind and Degree: and is entered into Purity, Joy and Glory, full and eternal! — And can you grieve for his *Salvation*? No, my dear Friend, this must be Matter of your *Rejoicing*. — And let not *his last Trials*, be *your last* *Griefs*. For now, He remembers no more the *Sorrow*, for the *Joy*: And won't you rejoice with him?) That his *light Affliction* which was but for a *Moment*; did *work* for him (as God thereby prepar'd him for) a *far more exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory!* — And grieve not, tho' your nearest and dearest *Relatives* have *forsaken* you: For now you are desolate: **THE LORD** will *take you up*. Cast therefore, all your *Care* upon Him: for HE careth for you. Your *personal* Care, your *relative* Care, your *every Concern*, that *burdens* your Mind, the LORD calls for, to be cast upon Him; and has graciously promis'd to *sustain* you. To support you *under*, and deliver you out, of all your Distresses. Wherefore, *Trust* in the LORD *forever*: for in the LORD **JEHOVAH** is *everlasting Strength*. And you shall see him for you, a God
working

working Wonders! *The Grace of Christ be with your Spirit! In Him, I am,*
Your affectionate Friend and Servant,

L E T T E R LVI. To Mr. F.

INDEED the Lord hath highly favour'd, and wrought Marvels for unworthy me. But ah, I have not rendred to the Lord, according to the great Things which He hath done for me! I-mourn, I lament, that by reason of natural and sinful Weakness, I cannot love and serve the Lord as I would. Never did I do any good Thing of myself, but HE wrought in me, both to will and to do, of his good Pleasure. Never did I do any Thing that was good, but I some way or other, marr'd it by Sin. Never did I do any Thing worthy of my Lord's Notice. And with inward Grief and humble Shame, I freely confess, That all my *best Righteousnesses* are but *filthy Rags*. — And will my great Lord, pass by and pardon all my Transgressions, and Imperfections in his Service, and accept and reward all my little Essays, my weak Attempts to serve him, as if I had *done* Something for him; yea, *welcome me*, as you say, into endless Joy and Glory! O *Who is a God-like unto HIM*, in *Grace*! *Grace, Grace!* is now, and ever will be my Cry, to the Whole of my *Salvation*, from *Foundation* to *Top Stone*. O the Sovereignty, the Immensity and Eternity of my *Lord's Grace*! Of his Inexhaustible, All-overflowing *Grace*: Which follows me in various, copious *Streams*, to waft me into boundless *Bliss*; to his eternal *Glory*! O how well is it for *me*, Brother, for *you*,

you, and for every poor *Sinner*, that flees by *Faith* to the great *Saviour*, That *Grace* reigns thro' *Righteousness* to eternal *Life*, by *Jesus Christ* our *Lord*! And unto free, rich, reigning *Grace*, which alone makes the Difference between those that are *saved*, and them that *perish*, be the present and endless *Praise*.

I am glad, Dear Sir, that your Heart is reconcil'd to the *Sovereignty* of God, in the predestinating Acts of his *Will*, respecting the *Vessels of Wrath*, fitted to *Destruction*, and the *Vessels of Mercy*, which He had afore prepared unto *Glory*: And that with pleasing Wonder and humble Adoration, at sovereign Mercy, and righteous Severity, you justify God in both. — You lament, as we ought, “That any of the Creatures of God, should tax Him with Cruelty and Injustice, in predestinating any Man to Damnation.” For such is the infinite Righteousness and Goodness of *Jehovah's* Nature, that He cannot do any Thing that is *unjust*, or be unjustly *cruel* to his *Creature*. — And however sinful Men, may now cavil against God's *Decree*, as if *that* was the Cause of their Destruction: God will make it evident before all, at the awful Day of Judgment, that He is *clear* from the *Blood of all Men*, that those which *perish*, have *destroy'd themselves*, that their own *Sin*, and not his *Decree*, was the procuring Cause of their *Damnation*. For every *Mouth* shall then be *stopped*, and *all the World* become guilty (and self-condemned) before God: — And one would think, it was enough to silence any poor *Sinner* now, if he did but duly consider:

That God's appointing any Man to *Wrath*, was only on Account of his *Sin Fore-view'd*. That to this Sin of his, he was not enforced by God's *Decree*, but sinned *freely*: As all Men did in *Adam*; and as all his Descendants do, from the mere Motion of their *own Will*.

Will. That God *destroys none*, nor *decreed* to destroy any, from under the Gospel-Revelation of the *Saviour*, but those who abide *impenitent* and *unbelieving*, that go on still in their *Trespases*, and obstinately refuse the Calls of the Gospel, unto *Faith in Christ*, and *Repentance towards God*. That with these Vessels of Wrath, God from the Riches of his Goodness, *endures with much Long-suffering*. That He never inflicts *Punishment* upon Men, till they by their *Obstinacy in Sin*, make the Execution of Justice absolutely *necessary*. That God *delights not* in the *Death of a Sinner*, as it is the Destruction of his *Creature*. And that, tho' the infinite Purity of God's Nature, obligeth him to hate Sin infinitely, and the Exactness of his Truth and Justice, to punish it severely, He exceeds not the Bounds of *Righteousness*; He lays not on Man more than is meet; not a Grain Weight of *Punishment*, more than the Sin of an obstinate Offender hath *deserved*: Yea, no more than is consistent with, and even required by, the infinite *Goodness* of his *Nature*. For, Is it not a Piece of *Goodness*, in any just *Legislator*, to *punish* a capital, and irreclaimable Offender? And shall not the Judge of all the Earth, do Right? Yes verily, it is one Part of God's *Goodness*, which he caus'd to pass before *Moses*, That He will by no Means clear the Guilty, *Exod. xxxiv. 7.* He will appear to be a God glorious in *Holiness*, in the Execution of his *strict Justice*; and for it as such, by Saints and Angels, He will be forever glorify'd.

And why should any be offended, That God for Sin, should appoint Some unto *Wrath*; when all Men, as Sinners, had *deserved to die the Death*? And when God would have been glorious in the Execution of his strict Justice, and forever glorify'd for it by his holy Angels, had he sent all Mankind for Sin, down to

Hell, to be punished with everlasting Destruction, as he did the Angels that sinned? Had all perished; it would have been an awful Display of glorious Justice. Are any saved; how bright is the Display of free Mercy, and sovereign Grace! And mayn't the sovereign Lord of all, do what He will with his own? Be gracious unto whom He will be gracious, and shew Mercy on whom He will shew Mercy: While in the Execution of his Wrath for Sin, He doth not the least Wrong, unto any Man? O what a silencing Word ought that to be, to all proud, unbelieving, cavilling Sinners, The Wages of Sin is Death! And what a Heart-cheering Word should that be, to all humble, believing Sinners, The Gift of GOD is Eternal Life, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord! Rom. vi. 23. Death, eternal Death, is the due Desert of vile, hateful Sin. But Life, eternal Life, is the free Gift, of infinite Grace, thro' a crucify'd JESUS!

And since the Gospel of Salvation is proclaim'd to all, and the chief of Sinners invited to come to Christ for Life, yea, and assured by him, That none that come unto him, shall be cast out: Why should any poor Soul stand disputing about, and cavilling against God's secret Will? Rather let him listen to, and comply with, God's revealed Will; for none shall perish from under the Gospel, but those that disobey the Gospel.

And let us, who have happily experienced the Gospel of Christ, to be the Power of God unto our Salvation; adore the Grace of our Saviour, and in all Manner of holy Conversation, say, Thanks be unto GOD for (CHRIST) his unspeakable GIFT! And in Bowels of Mercy, and in every Path of Duty, let us do our utmost to win poor Sinners unto Faith in Christ, that they with us, deliver'd from endless Misery, may inherit
eternal

eternal Glory! The Grace of Christ be with your Spirit!
 In Him, I am, Dear Sir,
Your Affectionate Friend and Servant,

LETTER LVII. To Mrs. Q.

My very Dear Sister in Christ,

IT was good News to me to hear of your Soul's Prosperity, of the Lord's loving Kindness towards you, in blessing you with sweet *Communion* and daily *Fellowship* with *Himself*, as your Royal *Bridegroom*: And that now you can lay *Claim* unto Him, and all his Fulness; tho' in Times past you was apt to *doubt* your Interest. And even so, *Stand fast in the Lord*, my dear Sister: Receiving the Holy Spirit's *Witness*, borne unto your Spirit by his *Word*, that you are a *Child of God*: And thus *set to your Seal*, that HE is *true*. As this will be much for God's Honour, and for your exceeding Joy. To be blest with the *Knowledge of Interest in Christ*, is a Privilege unspeakable. And with joyful *Communion with Him in Love*, a choice, additional Favour. — No Wonder that such a Soul desires to *depart*, and to be *with Christ*, which is *far better*. The sweet Clusters of *Canaan's Grapes*, brought us in the Wilderness, whet our Appetite after the *Heavenly Country*, that *exceeding good Land*. Where we with all the Saints, at Home with Christ, shall feast upon HIM the *Tree of Life*, in the Variety and Perpetuity of his new and abundant *Fruits*, unto growing Joys, and endless Days. Then, O then, GOD shall wipe away all *Tears from our Eyes*: And there shall be no more Death, neither Sorrow, nor Crying, neither shall

there be any more Pain; (inward or outward) for the former Things shall be passed away! Let us then, as Heirs of God, and Joint-Heirs with CHRIST, rejoyce now, in Hope of approaching Glory. Of that Glory, which awaits our Persons, which awaits our dear Fellow-Members in Christ, our Brethren of the Church militant, who with us shall shortly join the Church Triumphant. Our Lord's Joy, as the Head of the Church, will not be full, till He sees all his Seed bro't in: Converted by Grace, and rais'd unto Glory. When He thus sees us, the whole Election of Grace, and all our ineffable Bliss, as the Fruit of the Travel of his Soul; He shall be satisfy'd: His Heart contented, and delighted for ever. Such is the boundless Grace, of our altogether-lovely, and infinitely loving Lord! And Completeness of Joy, it will add to the Saints now in Glory, to see all their Brethren brought in; to share with them the same Felicity, to a blest Eternity. And as for us, the Beloved of the Lord, appointed to Salvation by Jesus Christ, when we are presented Faultless before the Presence of his Glory; it will be with exceeding Joy. The Joy of Glory, to God, the Father, Son and Spirit, and to Saints and Angels, will be an exceeding Joy. A Joy far exceeding all our present Conception and Expression. So great is the Hope laid up for us in Heaven! And how great then should be our present Joy, in Hope of future Glory!

But, my dear Sister, with Patience let us wait our appointed Time, till blest Eternity comes on. Shan't we, so highly favour'd, to know that for us there remaineth an eternal Rest; be free to endure all the Troubles appointed for us in this present Time: Since the Glory of God and our Advantage, are jointly concern'd in our behaving well, under these light and momentary Afflictions? Not a Trouble passeth over us, but we are call'd thereby to glorify God, in doing and suffering

suffering *his Will*, and thus to be *Followers of them who thro' Faith and Patience inherit the Promises*. — If, like our *Lord*, we do the *Work* which the *Father* hath given us to *do*, and being meek and lowly in Heart, we *learn Obedience* by the *Things which we suffer* ; we shall thereby *serve our Generation according to the Will of God*, and glorify Him upon the Earth. And doubtless, our *Labour*, is not, shall not be *in vain in the Lord* : And our *light Affliction* which is but for a *Moment*, *worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory*. Then, let us not be *weary of Well-doing* ; for in *due Season* we shall *reap*, if we *faint not*. Shall we desire to go to Heaven, before we have done all the *Work* appointed us to do for the *Glory of God* upon the Earth ? Shall we desire to shun any *Cross*, which is to prepare us for, and to advance our *Crown* ? No ; rather let us ask *Wisdom of God*, wisely to improve our every *Day's Exercise*, for the *Glory of Him* that hath loved us ; which shall be unto our *Glory*, when *Christ* appears. Thus, rejoicing in, waiting for, and hastening unto, the *Coming of the Day of God* ; let us spend the little *Time* that remains unto us : And soon our *Race* will be *run*, the *Prize* won, and we shall *enter into the Joy of our Lord*, to live with Him, and reign in Life by Him, to a *Never-ending Eternity*. — That *all Grace* may *abound towards you*, and you *increase with all the Increases of God* ; till that which is in *Part*, shall be *done away*, by the *Coming of that which is Perfect* : is the sincere Desire of, my Dear Sister,

Yours most affectionately in our dear Lord,

L E T T E R LVIII. To Mrs H.

My Dear Sister in the Lord,

HAPPY are You, in that the Lord hath wrought such earnest Desires in your Heart, after the Building and Beauty of *Sion*. When the Lord gives the *Spirit of Supplication*, it is the Forerunner of approaching *Salvation*. And wonder not at the Darkneſs which now covers you; as knowing that it is *darkeſt*, juſt before *Break of Day*. *Hope in God*; go on to *ſeek him*; and you ſhall yet *praiſe him*. — The Scriptures which the Lord apply'd to your Heart, ought to be the Ground of Faith and Prayer. And that which you laſt mention, from which you had a Hint, that you muſt be brought yet lower, before Deliverance came: Should excite you to a patient Waiting for God, until He ariſe and have Mercy upon *Sion*, the ſet Time to favour her, being come. For, *In the Mount of the LORD, it ſhall be ſeen*. When *Diſtreſſes* are *greateſt*, Deliverance is *neareſt*. And therefore, by that Word, as apply'd unto you, *Be in Pain, and labour to bring forth*, &c. the Lord might intend, not only the *Diſtreſſes* which are now upon you, but might alſo point you thereby to your preſent *Duty*, under your preſſing Griefs. That you ought patiently to *endure Pain*, like a *travailing Woman*, in *Hope of Deliverance*. Be cauſe *Sion's God*, hath ſaid of *Sion's Glory*, *Shall I bring to the Birth, and not cauſe to bring forth? ſaith the LORD*: The Self-existent, All-ſufficient, and Wonder-working *JEHOVAH*. And farther, That you ſhould by Faith and Love wreſtle with him in *Prayer*; and thereby labour to bring forth: The promis'd, long'd-for Glory of *Sion's King*, upon *Sion's Hill*:

Hill: Unto whom the first Dominion shall come. For, Your Heart shall live, that seek God. God shall help you, and that right early — And that the Lord may grant you a great and speedy Deliverance, and do for you more exceeding abundantly than you can ask or think; to your full Joy, and his endless Glory: is the hearty Desire and Prayer of, Dear Sister,

Yours in Christ for Ever,

L E T T E R LIX. To Mrs. H.

My very Dear Sister in Christ,

IT is your unspeakable Privilege, that your *Lord* loves you. That in his *Love*, you have *Himself*, and all his *Fulness*, in the *Right* thereof: And thence shall have the *Enjoyment* of *HIM*, and of all the *Treasures* of his *Grace* and *Glory*, for the full *Supply* of all your *Need*, thro' *Time* and to *Eternity*. If the *Fulness* of *Christ* could *decay*, if the *Love* of his *Heart* could *change*, or if your *Relation* to *Him* could be *dissolved*; you were *undone*! Your innumerable *Wants*, would *exhaust* his *Stores*; your great *Provocations*, *alter* his *Mind*; and the *Mis-improvement* of your *Bridal Relation*, would *snap in sunder* your *Marriage Union*. — But O! *married* to the *Son of God*: In *HIM* you have an infinite *Fulness*, that cannot be *sunk*, unto endless *Ages*! In *HIM* you have a *Love* great enough, to bear your whole *Weight*, the *Weight* of your *Unworthiness*, the *Weight* of your *Provocations*, without the least *Warp*, or *Turn*, to the *Days of Eternity*! And in *HIM* you have a *Husband*, that *Aye sustains*, and will *Forever fill*, his *Marriage-Relation* to *you*. And that holds,

holds, that draws, that secures You to *Himself Forever!* Having loved you as his Own, as his own *Flesh*, into the nearest Relation, the closest Conjunction, He will love you as His, *unto the End!* Unto *Perfection*, thro' an immeasurable *Space*, of an infinite *Duration!*

Come then, Rejoyce in your *Portion*. Bosom yourself, in your great *Beloved!* Solace your Soul, in his immense, unchangeable, and eternal *Glories!* In his bottomless, boundless, endless *Fulness!* For lo, *Christ*, and his *unsearchable Riches*, are *yours*, forever *yours!* Your *Beloved* is *yours*, and you are *His*. Come up from the *Wilderness* leaning on his Bosom, leaning on his Arm. Plead Relation; your Lord will own it. Ask an increasing Display of his infinite Favour; your Lord will bestow it. Bring your empty Vessels, your unnumber'd Wants, to Salvation's Well; your Lord will grant you an exuberant Fill; and will do for you, *more exceeding abundantly than you can ask or think!* From *Love unknown!* From *Love invariable!* Unto *Bliss ineffable* and *eternal!* — O Happy Soul! *Beloved of the LORD!* Love and serve him increasingly, until these thou shalt do perfectly, incessantly and eternally! *The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your Spirit!* In Him, with tender Love, I am,

Your sincere Friend and Servant,

L E T T E R LX. To Mrs. S.

My dear Sister in Christ,

THE Loss of your dear Relative, must nearly touch you. But tho' the Joy that you and others had in her, and her Usefulness in the Church of God below, is ceased; you have Cause of superior Joy,

Joy, in that she is advanced to see the Face of God and of the Lamb, and to serve him in a higher Sphere, among the Saints and Seraphs round the Throne.

As to the Fears which seiz'd you about your State, from a Tho't, " That if you lov'd Christ superlatively, (you would not be so unwilling to part with Creature-Comforts, nor so much cast down at the Loss of them : " Consider :

That Souls who love Christ superlatively, are not always in the Exercise of that Love : At least, in that Degree of it, which excludes immoderate Sorrow, for the Loss of desirable Things in the present Time. — The Disciples of Christ, lov'd his Person superlatively, as their Lord and Saviour : But mourn'd excessively, for the Loss of his Bodily Presence, and the sweet Enjoyments they had thereby, in his personal Ministry, when he told them *He must go away*. This was such heavy Tidings to them, that from a Fore-Thought of parting with their Lord, Sorrow filled their Hearts, Joh. xvi. 6. And that this was immoderate, is evident, in that our Lord said unto them, *If ye loved Me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father : for my Father is greater than I*, Chap. xiv. 28. Their Sorrow, must needs be excessive, as it hindred that Joy, which they should have had in their Lord's Advancement. They lov'd their own Enjoyments, at that Time, above their Lord's Glory, his personal Glory, simply and alone consider'd. And thence, their Sorrow for the Loss of the former, hinder'd their present Joy in the latter. And yet, they lov'd their Lord's Person and Glory superlatively ; tho' they were not then in the Exercise of that Love ; at least in that Degree of it, which would have excluded, immoderate Sorrow, for their Loss, in their Lord's Departure. Our Lord by saying, *If ye loved Me, ye would rejoice* : Did not in the least intimate,

That there was *no true Love to Him* in their Hearts, nor yet, *any superlative Love* to his Glory: But only signify'd thereby, that they were not then in the *Exercise* of that *Love*, and thence excited them to their Duty, to love Him and his Glory, more singly and purely, and to flow into the Will of God in his Departure from them, more fully and complacently. Which he had likewise told them was so necessary, that if *He went not away*, the *Comforter* would not come; and so much for their Advantage, that if *He departed*, He would *send Him*; *pray the Father*, and *He should give them another Comforter*, who should *abide with them for ever*.

Hence then, my dear Sister, whenever the Lord tries us, by taking away any Creature or Thing, below Himself, or by taking from us the Enjoyment of Himself, in this or that particular Way: Let us be ware of excessive Grief; let us humble ourselves before God on account of it, so far as it prevails; let us intreat the fresh Supplies of his Grace, to draw out our superlative Love, to the Lord and his Glory; in such a superlative Degree, that may exclude immoderate Sorrow for our own Loss, and excite our Joy for God's Glory, accounting that our Gain, as in itself considered, and complacently flowing into the Will of God, let us believe that *all Things* do and shall *work together for our Good*, our present and eternal Advantage.

I should give a Hint to the Texts you mention, *Job xxix. 25.* and *2 Cor. vi. 18.* And the Lord's Voice to you in the first, *Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at Peace; so thereby God shall come unto thee.* Is this, *Come now, thou dear Child of my infinite Love, now thy Heart is troubled for the Loss of a pleasant and profitable Creature, come to the Bosom of thy*
Y
Creator;

'Creator; solace thyself in thy God and Saviour, in
 'the Immenſity and Eternity of my Love and Fulneſs;
 'acquaint thyſelf now with Me, who in all my un-
 'bounded and unchanging Glories, am entirely and
 'eternally thine. Thereby Good ſhall come unto thee.
 'Thence thou ſhalt find in Me, a ſuperior *Blisſ*, to
 'that which thou haſt loſt in the Creature; and find
 'thy *Loſs*, under my over-ruling *Grace*, to be for thy
 'preſent and eternal *Gain*.' — And by the other Text,
We pray you in Chriſt's Stead, be ye reconciled to God:
 The Lord calls you to be reconciled unto Him, in the
 preſent Providence, to flow ſweetly into his dear Will,
 in this Dispensation, who hath reconciled you unto Him-
 ſelf by Jeſus Chriſt, and is in all Things to you, and in
 this, The God of Peace:

As ſeeing the Son then, and believing in Him, you
 have eternal Life, in the Right, and Begun Enjoyment
 of it now? Preſs forward by Faith and Love, rejoicing
 in Hope of the Glory of God. Faint not, but believe to
 ſee the Goodneſs of the Lord in the Land of the Living.
 And ſoon you ſhall ſee his Goodneſs, to ineffable *Blisſ*,
 in eternal Life. — I commit you to Him on whom you have
 believed: Great Grace be with you! And am with much
 Affection,
 Yours in the Lord for ever,

LETTER LXI. To Mr. F.

Dear Sir,

BECAUSE JESUS lives, you ſhall live alſo. Rejoice in
 your Portion; live upon, and to the Lord, in
 every Thing. You will ſoon live with Him; and glad

will you be, when your *Time* is gone, and blest *Eternity* comes on, of every Word and Work, you said or did for *Christ*; while Time and Strength was *afforded*. Work *now*, for the Glory of Him that hath loved you; you will quickly enter into *Rest*, and give Him the *Praise* of *all his Grace*. — I am glad you see the Necessity of the *New Birth*. For, *without Holiness*, of Heart and Life, by the regenerating Work, and sanctifying Influences of the Holy Ghost, *no Man shall see the Lord*. We not only must not, but *cannot* enjoy God, if our Souls are not transformed into his *Image*. *Like Things*, bosom *in*, as *Contraries* naturally, flee *from*, each other. — It is my Joy likewise, that you *relish* the rich, free, distinguishing *Grace of God*. An Evidence this, that you are one of the *New-born*. For none but such, *taste that the Lord is gracious*. And this they do with ineffable Pleasure, when blest with a lively Hope, and firm Persuasion of their own *Interest*, in that sovereign *Grace of God*, which only can, and fully doth, *bring Salvation*, to all those that *believe in Jesus*, as being of old *ordained unto eternal Life*. — Then, Brother, when *Grace* hath brought us to *Glory*; we'll shout its *Praises* to a blest *Eternity*. And each, struck with sweet Surprise, with adoring Wonder strive, who shall sing loudest, *Lord, why me! Why me*, while *Thousands, Thousands* are passed by! Even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy Sight! Farewel in the Lord. Dear Sir,

Your affectionate Friend in Christ,

P. M. F.

L E T T E R L X I .

Dear Sir,

Because Jesus loved you shall live a's. Rejoice in your portion: live now, and to the Lord, in every Thing. You will soon live with Him; and glad will

L E T -

LETTER LXII. To — —

My dear Friend,

IN Love to your Soul, I write a Line, to warn you of the Danger of sinning against Light: As I hear *That* you are perswaded you do wrong; that you *ought* to forsake all, and follow the Lamb, even *whithersoever* He goeth; and to come out from *the* World of unconverted Men, and the Worship which they cleave to, lest you be a Partaker of *their* Sins, and so of their *Plagues*.— I must say, *That* your Case, has appear'd to me very awful, and what I could not well account for.— But it gives me fresh Hope concerning you, as the Spirit of God han't done striving with you, but convinceth your Mind that you have forsaken the Lord, and inclineth your Heart to return.— I beseech you therefore for the Lord's Sake, and for your Soul's Sake, that you regard the Dictates of the Holy Ghost to your Mind, and comply with his Motions upon your Heart. For, *To him that knoweth to do Good, and doth it not, to him it is Sin*: Aggravated Sin: Sin by Ways of Eminence. And, *He that knoweth his Master's Will, and doth it not, shall be beaten with many Stripes*. What your State is towards God, the Searcher of Hearts knoweth: But this I think is certain, that neither you yourself, nor any other Christian, can have an Evidence at present, that you *love Christ supremely*. And he that loves him *not above all*, loves him *not at all*, as he ought to do, or in *Sincerity*. And you well know that awful Text, *If any Man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maran-atha*, 1. Cor. xvi. 22. Or,

let him be *accursed* when the *Lord cometh*. And what Evidence, my dear Friend, have you, that you *do* love the Lord above all, when you *cannot* forsake all for him? You know what our Lord has taught his Disciples, as the first Lesson they are to learn, *Luke xiv. 26, 27. If any Man come to Me, and hate not his Father, and Mother, and Wife, and Children, and Brethren, and Sisters, yea, and his own Life also, he cannot be my Disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his Cross, and come after Me, cannot be my Disciple.* This Hatred here spoken of, which respects our nearest and dearest Relatives, is not to be understood of an absolute Hatred of their Persons, (for these by the Law of God we are obliged to love) but of their evil Ways, when they would hinder us from following Christ. And then, we are to carry it towards them as if we hated them: That is, we are not to follow their Dictates, when they would draw us off from Christ, nor to fear their Threatnings, in cleaving to Him; but to have an Abhorrence of both as evil. And this Kind of Hatred of Relations, yea, and of our own Life, when the Love of it would hinder our laying it down for Christ's Sake, if he calls for it, is required; and naturally it flows from a superlative Love to Christ in the Heart. And *without it, and so a Taking up the Cross*, any, and every Cross, our Lord calls us to bear; A Man cannot be his Disciple: Nor will be tho't worthy of Him, when He appears. If we don't cleave to the Truth of the Gospel, so far as we know it, in the Face of a Thousand Difficulties, Reproaches, and Oppositions; we *sell* the Truth, we *deny* the Truth, and have no Evidence, if we continue so to do, that we are of the Truth. We ought to follow the Lord in every Path of Duty he is pleas'd to shew us. As saith the Apostle, *Phil. iii. 16. Where to we have already attained,*

tained, let us walk by the same Rule, let us mind the same Thing. And thus we are to press forward in our *Christian Race*, looking to that immortal *Crown of Glory*, which of the *freest Grace*, shall be given to *Overcomers*.

Alas, my Friend, you did run well, but you have been *hindred*. And what *Fruit* have you, of your forsaking the Lord? *Terror of Conscience* now. And how much more of that Kind of bitter Fruit you may have when *Death* approaches, you know not. God may make you a *Terror to yourself*, and to all about you. And how poor an *Excuse* will it be, when you appear before the *Judgment Seat of Christ*, and must give Account of the *Things done in the Body*, whether good or evil, to say, 'Lord, I would have followed thee according to the Truth of thy Word, and the Light of my Conscience; if my nearest Relative had not made such great Opposition.' Alas, my dear Friend, think what an awful *Reply*, our Lord would make to such a Speech. Would you lose a far more exceeding and eternal Weight of *Glory*, for a little temporal *Ease*, and Freedom from *Affliction*? The *Favour of God*, for *Peace with Man*? No surely. Hearken then to the Lord's Voice, *Whatsoever thy Hand findeth to do, do it with thy Might*, for there is no *Wisdom* nor *Devote* in the Grave, whither thou goest. And, *Boast not thyself of To-morrow*; for thou knowest not what a Day may bring forth.

Our Lord calls you indeed to forsake all, in Heart, and to follow Him. — But then remember, He hath promised, That He will never leave, nor forsake you. That your *Shoes* shall be *Iron and Brass*, and as your *Days*, your *Strength*. He doth not call you to go a *Warfare* on your own Charges, to conflict with Troubles in your own Strength; but hath said *His Grace is sufficient*

sufficient for you, and His Power shall rest upon you. And inviting you to take his Yoke upon you, He says; *My Yoke is easy, and my Burden is light*, Mat. xi. 30. And again, He thus assures you, *Verily I say unto you, There is no Man that hath left House, or Brethren, or Sisters, or Father, or Mother, or Wife, or Children, or Lands, for my Sake, and the Gospel's, but he shall receive an Hundred-fold now in this Time, Houses; and Brethren, and Sisters, and Mothers, and Children, and Lands, (in Value, tho' not in Kind: He shall receive the Comforts of all these in God, even to an Hundred-fold,) with Persecutions*; (as a sweet Cross, to prepare him for a glorious Crown) *and in the World to come, Eternal Life*, Mark x. 29, 30.

You see then, my dear Friend, That it is impossible for any one to be a *Loser*, in following Christ. The more we *lose* for Him, the greater is our *Gain*. The greater are our *Trials*, the greater and brighter will be our *Crown*. — And, believe it, if you follow the Lord fully, He will appear for you greatly. He will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able to bear; but with the Temptation, will make a Way to escape. He hath all *Hearts* in his *Hand*, and turns them as the *Rivers of Water* which Way soever he pleaseth. He saith to the Wrath of Man, as to the raging Sea, *Hitherto shalt thou come, and no further*, and here shall thy proud Waves be stayed. Therefore, *Fear not them that can kill the Body*, (if you was call'd to suffer even unto Death: for Christ would give you a *Crown of Life*) *but fear Him, who after He hath killed, hath Power to cast into Hell*. — That the Lord may make you wise unto Salvation: is the hearty Desire of, my dear Friend,

Yours affectionately,

L E T.

L E T T E R LXIII. To Mr. A.

My very dear Brother in Christ,

YOUR last kind Letter I receiv'd, and give Thanks to God, that He was pleas'd to make my poor Books of Use to many dear Souls with you; and thankful I am to you, Brother, that you told me of the Lord's Kindness therein: To *Him* the Glory is due. — I rejoice, Brother, that your Faith of Interest in Christ is strengthened, and abides firm, amidst all Shakings, by the Variation of your Frames. And that when oppressed by your spiritual Enemies, you flee to Christ for Help against them: For your Cleansing from all Sin in his precious Blood, and for the subduing of all your Iniquities by his Almighty Arm.

You *groan*, my Brother, being *burdened*, with the *Body of Sin*, of *Death*, that dwelleth in you: And because of that *Distance* from God, which by the separating Things of this World, is occasioned to you. In both you have the *Sympathy* of your *great High Priest* in *Heaven*, the infinite Sympathy of your *Beloved's Heart*. And lo, HE lives at *God's Right Hand*, HE *ever liveth*, to *save you to the uttermost*. To succour you in your Conflicts with the Powers of Sin and Hell: To subdue your spiritual Enemies, and utterly destroy them, at his appointed, and your approaching, Time of Deliverance: And to bring you into as full Conformity to God, and as near Communion with Him, as your Soul can wish, unto endless Ages! And *freed from Sin*, and *bro't to God*, my Brother, even into his immediate *Presence*, and *set, Holy and without Blame before HIM in Love*: What can you *desire more*?

No, you'll say, this is the ALL of my Desires, the *Ultimate* of my hop'd-for, long'd-for, and expected

Bliss. But O! while I abide in this Tabernacle, I groan, being *burdened*, with *Sin* in my *Soul*, and *Distance* from *GOD*.

But my Brother, since your Lord's Name is called *JESUS*, because He shall *save his People from their Sins*, and bring them unto *GOD*: Let your *future Salvation*, be your *present Joy*: And press *forward* towards the *Mark*, for this *Prize* of the *High Calling* of *GOD in Christ*. Follow on to know, and love and serve the *Lord*, increasingly in this *World*; and in these *Respects* you shall know Him. Draw nigh to *GOD*, in all appointed Means of *Grace*; and He will draw nigh to you, in the *Displays* of his *Glory*. Come up from the *Wilderness*, march towards *Canaan's Land*, leaning upon your *Beloved*. His saving *Arm*, his cheering *Bosom*, are your *Joint Privilege*, your free, great *Privilege*, of distinguishing *Favour*, bestowed on you, as the *Beloved of the LORD*. And while you rest on your *Mighty Lover*, your *Almighty Saviour*, and trust your *Salvation* in *his Hands*, who hath laid the *Foundation*, and will bring forth the *Head Stone* thereof with *Shoutings*, crying, *Grace, Grace unto it*: Rejoice you in *Hope of the Glory of GOD*. For now is your *Salvation* nearer than when you (first) believed.—The *Sorrows* and *Sufferings* of this *Life* pass away, yea, are but for a *Moment*, if compar'd with that *Eternity* of *Bliss*; which awaits us in the *Life to come*. And while the *GOD* of all *Grace* works graciously upon us by these: Our *light Affliction*, which is but for a *Moment*, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal *Weight of Glory*! Our *groaning Souls*, under present *Misery*, and after future *Glory*, are to be deliver'd from the *one*, and blest with the *other* speedily. And our *Groans* after *Immortality*, that *Mortality* might be swallowed up of *Life*, are our *Preparation by Grace*, for our *prepared Glory*: The *Ap-*
petite

petite given us, for that eternal *Feast* which awaits us : And are also a present *Evidence* of our future *Bliss*, or that God hath wrought us for the self-same Thing.

You long to be *dissolved*, Brother, and to be *with Christ*, which is *far better*. And soon your Desires shall be granted. But, be free to abide in the *Flesh*, your appointed Time, for the Lord's Glory in and by *you*, and for your Glory, in and with *Him*, present and eternal. — The *Canaanites* were left in the Land, to prove *Israel*. And Sin is left in our Souls, and various Sorrows must attend our Lives, to give us Opportunities to glorify our Lord, and shew the Valour of our Graces, as *good Soldiers of Jesus Christ*, by watching against, and making War upon, all the Enemies of our Lord the King. Little do you think, Brother, how much you glorify Christ, and delight his Heart, when you are efficaciously taught by the *Grace* that bringeth *Salvation*, to deny *Ungodliness* and *worldly Lusts*, and to live *soberly, righteously, and godly in this present (evil) World* : Nor yet, how much your *good Conversation in Christ*, will be to his *eternal Honour and Pleasure*. Our Lord's Glory and Joy in his People, express'd before his Father, *I am glorify'd in them* : Nor will, nor can, know any *Decay*. As our *Obedience* glorifies his *Name*, and cheers his *Heart* in the *present Time* ; so the Honour and Pleasure which will arise unto *Him thereby*, in the Remembrance *thereof*, will be *eternal*. And most surely, every Thing that we are enabled to do or suffer for *Christ now*, will be the Matter of our *endless Joy* ; and all our Doings and Sufferings for *Him* in this present Time, thro' our Lord's infinite *Grace*, shall serve as so many *Jewels*, to enrich our *Crown of eternal Glory*. — And who then, that *loves Christ*, his *Honour and Pleasure*, present and eternal ; and has a due Regard to his *own Happiness* in

this World, and in that which is to come; would not be heartily willing to *suffer*, and earnestly desirous to *do*, the *whole Will of God*, for these blessed *Ends*!

And tho' our Gospel Obedience, to our great Grief, is very imperfect; yet, let this be our great Joy, That *our Salvation*, from *Sin*, shall be to *God's eternal Honour*. The Forgiveness of all our Sins, to the endless Honour, of the exceeding Riches of the *Father's Grace*: The Cleansing of our Souls, from all our Uncleanness and deep-dy'd Sins, from the Guilt and Filth of all our Transgressions, to the endless Honour, of the boundless *Grace* of the dying *Saviour*, and the infinite Merit and Efficacy of his precious *Blood*: And the subduing of our Iniquity, and the Sanctification of our Nature, to the endless Honour, of the Almighty Power and Grace of the *Holy Ghost*, our *Sanctifier*.—This, my dear Brother, may be a Relief to our Spirits, under the heavy Burden of our daily Infirmities.

But as *Sin* is the greatest of *Evils* in itself; as it is the abominable *Thing* which *God bates*; as it casts the greatest *Dis honour* upon the *LORD, Father, Son, and Spirit*; and as it brings the greatest *Misery* upon *us*, and *others*: O let us in the Strength of Christ, in all Things *watch*, and *strive against Sin*! And in all Things *labour*, for *God's Honour*, and our own and others Advantage, to be *HOLINESS TO THE LORD*, more than ever!—*The Grace of Christ be with your Spirit*! With affectionate Esteem, I am, my dear Brother,

Yours in the Lord for ever,

 L E T-

L E T T E R LXIV. To — —

My dear Sister in Christ,

I Am grieved with you, for your Loss. — But it becomes us to submit to God's holy Will. May the Lord sanctify it to you and yours, and to every of us, to whom this awful Stroke gives a loud Call, *Be ye also ready*: for at such an Hour as you *think not*, the *Son of Man cometh*! You see how suddenly, how unexpectedly, *Death cometh*; and after Death the *Judgment*: The awful Judgment, that decides our State, for a vast *Eternity*! Let this put you on a more earnest Concern, to be *actually ready* for your *Lord's Coming*. — And be not content to go to Heaven *alone*. Now you have but one of your nearest Relatives left, and know not how soon you may lose Him: (for when Death comes into a Family, it often strikes more than One, in a little Time.) O do your utmost, while his Health and Strength lasts, to shew him the Vanity of this World, and to persuade him to *seek a better Country*, a *City that hath Foundations*, of Bliss ineffable and eternal, whose Builder and Maker is God! Pray for him most earnestly and incessantly. Tell him his lost and miserable State by *Nature*, thro' original and actual *Sin*. That he must be *born again*, or can never see the *Kingdom of God*. And that this little Inch of *Time*, the *present Time*, is all he hath, to prepare for a blest *Eternity*. That if this is *misspent*, and the great Salvation proclaim'd in the Gospel *neglected*; his *Soul is lost forever*! Better far would it have been for him, if he had *never been born*! Tell him likewise, That God hath taken away his dear *Relative*, to warn him, in a
very

very particular Manner. That he is call'd hereby, to *turn* unto God speedily; and that the Lord *waits to see*, if his sparing *Goodness*, will lead him to *Repentance*. Set before him the great and precious Promises of the Gospel: That those who *seek the Lord truly*, that seek him *early*, shall *find Him*, unto *Life eternal*! &c. And who knows but God may incline his Heart to receive Instruction? — Have you been so tender and careful of his *Body*, from the first Moment of his Birth, until now, tho' you know it must soon *perish*, and turn to its original *Dust*: And can you disregard his *Soul*, his *immortal Soul*, that is far more *precious* than the *whole World*! As our Lord saith, *What shall it profit a Man if he gain the whole World, and lose his own Soul?* O the *Loss* of the *Soul*, is an *irreparable Loss*! *ALL* is *gone*, if the *Soul* is *lost*! What if a Man could gain the *Treasures*, *Pleasures*, and *Honours* of the *Universe*, call *Earth* and *Sea*, *Sun*, *Moon* and *Stars*, *all his Own*: If *CHRIST*, and *God* in *Him*, were not his present and everlasting *Portion*: Alas for him, his *Soul* were *lost*, he were *for ever undone*! And all these his momentary *Enjoyments*, which only served to increase his *Sins*, would prove as so many *Aggravations* of his endless *Torments*! *Son*, *remember*, that thou in thy *Life-time* hadst *thy good Things*: Will cause a fierce *Reflection*, that will make the *Furnace glow*, and serve as fresh *Fuel* to feed the quenchless *Flame*! — O then, my dear Sister, what *Care* and *Labour* can be too much, what enough, to take with your beloved *Relative* to prevent his *coming* into that *Place of Torment*! Should *Sickness* seize him, and *Death* approach; you would fear to speak to him then, lest *pensive Thoughts*, should increase his *Disease*. Therefore *now*, now he is in *Health*, if ever you do or say any Thing for his *Soul's Advantage*; Set about it *instantly*, and most *earnestly*.

nestly. Don't let Trifles *divert* you, nor make *him think*, That *Eternal Things*, are of *small Moment*, and not worth seeking for, most *ardently*! — And to far as you know the *blessed Gospel*, which has been *your Salvation*; and are satisfy'd that you hear it *clearly preach'd*: O do your utmost to bring *Him*, under the same *joyful Sound*! Who can tell but he may have the *Blessedness* to *know it for himself*, unto his *Joy* unspeakable here, and to his eternal *Glory* hereafter: — But perhaps you will say,

I should be glad to have my Relative attend the Worship of God with me, and to wait in the *Way* where Jesus passeth by. But the Dissenting Interest is so low and small, and there are so many that oppose and deride it; and reproach those that look-towards it; I think, for the Shame and Fear of Men, he will refuse Compliance with my Request, tho' otherwise he might be so inclined. — I answer:

If upon attempting your Duty in this Regard, you find that this is *really* the *Case* with him: O *compassionate his Soul*, under those *Chains of Darkness*, in which he is *held*: And looking up to God for a Blessing, be *you faithful*, and tell him plainly, That the *Friendship of this World*, is *Enmity with God*: That *Whosoever is ashamed of CHRIST*, his *Words*, and *Ways*, his *Gospel* and *Ordinances*, *before Men*; Of *him*, our Lord will be *ashamed*, when *He cometh in his own Glory*, in the *Glory of his Father*, and with all his *holy Angels*. And that *Whosoever will come after Christ*, up to *Heaven*, must *deny Himself*, and *take up his Cross*, and *follow him*: Or he cannot be *his Disciple*, and will not be accounted *worthy of Him*: Whom to *know*, to possess and enjoy, is *Life eternal*! — And ask him, Which he thinks is best that a Man should chuse, Whether to suffer a *momentary Shame* for Christ's Sake, from ev

Men *here* : Or to be raised up unto *Shame* and everlasting *Contempt* hereafter ? Or, to be put to an open *Shame*, before all the glorify'd *Saints* and holy *Angels*, yea, to have *Christ Himself* ashamed to own him, when *He* appears, when an *Interest* in the *Son of God*, will be apparently of more *Worth*, of infinitely more *Value*, than innumerable *Worlds* — And who can tell, *God*, by *You*, may persuade *Japheth*, and *He* may dwell in the *Tents of Shem*. And may say, to your Heart's Rejoycing, as *Ruth* to *Naomi*, *Thy People shall be my People, and thy God my God : Nought but Death shall part thee and me.*

As to your deceased Relative, I am glad you had *Hope* concerning him. *That*, may alleviate your *Grief* for his *Death*, and excite you to a more complacent Acquiescence with the *Will of God*. There is one *Instance* recorded in Scripture, that a dying Sinner, found Mercy ; *The Thief upon the Cross* : That none should despair, if *God* is pleased to call them at the *eleventh Hour*. And there is but *One* ; That none should presume, to trust to a *Death-Bed Repentance*, and put off the vast Concerns of *Eternity*, to that uncertain and afflicting Moment of *Time*, which is so very unfit for Things of the greatest Importance. — Wishing all *Grace and Peace* may abound towards you, to your abundant Growth and Fruitfulness in *this World*, and a weighty Crown of Glory in the *World to come* : I remain,

Your affectionate Friend and Servant,

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L E T T E R LXV. To Mr. F.

Dear Sir,

I Thank you for your kind Letter. It gives me Joy, that my last, with the Books sent, were acceptable and useful unto you and others. I should not have wrote so soon, but that you complain of *Darkness* and *Deadness of Spirit*, which sometimes seise you, and lament your *Heart-wandrings* from the *altogether-lovely* Jesus, after *other Objects*. Whence I was induced from Sympathy with you in your Soul-Trouble, to write a Line on this Head; and especially, as while I was lifting up my Heart to God for your renewed Quickning, the following Words dropt on my Mind, which I was willing to acquaint you with: *Viz.*

Hos. 14. 7, 8. *They that dwell under his Shadow shall return, they shall revive as the Corn, and grow as the Vine: the Scent thereof shall be as the Wine of Lebanon.*

Ephraim shall say, *What have I to do any more with Idols? I have heard him and observ'd him: I am like a green Fir-Tree, from ME is thy Fruit found.*

Here, Dear Sir, are reviving Cordials, to raise your fainting Spirit, if the Holy Ghost your Comforter with his own Hand is pleas'd to give them. — From the 7th Verse we may observe, 1. The Description here given of the People of God: They are such that *Dwell under his Shadow*. And 2. The Privileges of those that abide under the Shadow of the Almighty: Which are 1. Restoration from all their Backslidings, from all their Wandrings: *They shall return.* 2. Renewed Quicknings, after awful Decays: *They shall revive as the Corn.* 3. Abundant Growth and Fruit, in their Spring and Summer-Seasons: *And grow as the Vine.* And 4. The Acceptableness of their Persons, Graces

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and Services, to the Lord, and those that are His:
The Scent thereof shall be as the Wine of Lebanon.

I pass, Dear Sir, from the Hints here given of the People of God, and their Privilege in general, unto You in particular. And is it your blest Experience, That *you dwell under Christ's Shadow*? O how happy is your Situation, how great your Security, both for Time and Eternity! O the delightful *Shade*, that God the *Saviour*, as a great *Rock*, affords to us poor *Sinners*, that flee by *Faith to Him*, in this *weary Land*! When weary with the Guilt of Sin, our dear Lord Jesus, our all-attoning Sacrifice, is a refreshing Shade to us, from the scorching Heat of avenging Justice, and fiery Indignation. When weary with Sin's Defilement, the cleansing Fountain of his Blood, shades us from that Displeasure which infinite Purity, must otherwise shew at our Depravity. When weary with the Power of Sin, the Shade of our Lord's promis'd Grace, the Strength of his saving Arm, engaged for us, delivers us from the Grief we feel, and the Hurt we fear, from this our killing Foe. And when our Heaven-born Souls are weary with the Inbeing of Hellish Sin, O what a refreshing Shade, doth our Lord's inherent Purity, with that full Conformity thereto, we are to have in Glory, give to our Pilgrim-Souls, while seeking a better Country! Again, From Men and Devils, from the World with all its Snares, from Hell with all its Wiles and Powers, from all our Cares and Fears, our Griefs and Burthens, O what a delightful Rest, what a refreshing Shade, doth the Lord our Mighty Conqueror, our great Saviour, afford to us that come to Him, as weary, and heavy-laden Sinners! — And under *his Shadow*, Sir, *you dwell*, in *Christ*, the *secret Place of the most High*, and shall abide under the *Shadow of the Almighty*. — But perhaps you will say,

If I dwell under Christ's Shadow, how is it that
 Dead-

Deadness and Inactivity for God, that bitter Fruit of the Power of Sin, so often afflicts me? I answer :

There is a Two fold Dwelling under the Shadow of Christ, which respects Believers. As 1. *Habitual*. And 2. *Actual*. All Believers dwell under the Shadow of Christ *Habitually*, in that as they commit the Keeping of their Souls unto Him in Well-doing; So they are under his Care, and the Habit of Faith in their Hearts, is and shall be maintain'd by his gracious Influence, in Spite of all Opposition, from within and without. And all Believers likewise, do dwell under the Shadow of Christ *Actually*, in that they actually flee repeatedly unto Him by Faith, as their Refuge, Shelter and Deliverer, from all their Foes, Grievs and Dangers whatsoever; And so are blest with his kind Protection, gracious Influence, and great Salvation. But then, in this latter Sense, they don't *always* abide in Him, or cleave unto Him, in the actual Exercise of a lively Faith: And so they *lose* the Sweets of those blessed Privileges, which they once *enjoy'd*. — Unbelief too often prevails, which inclines us to depart from the Living God, from God our Saviour, by Heart-wandrings after other Lovers. Trifles divert our Thoughts, we lose Sight of our Beloved, and Sin getting the Ascendant of Grace, we pursue pleasing Shadows, delusive Shadows, and let go the Sum and Substance of all our Bliss: We forsake the LORD, our *Light*, our *Life*, our *ALL*, and depart into empty *Nothings*, vexing *Vanities*, into *Soul-Darkness* and *Death*. — And never should we return unto the Lord *more*, if He did not go *after us*, seek our *lost Souls*, lay us on his *Shoulder*, and bring us *Home rejoicing*. — But O the infinite Grace of God our Saviour, towards us the *Heirs* of his *Salvation*: HE sees us in all our Misery, and in the unsearchable Depths of his Never-

failing Mercy, He says concerning us, ‘ *They shall re-*
‘ *turn* : They are Mine still, tho’ rebellious, beloved
‘ of Me, tho’ ungrateful to Me : They dwell under
‘ *my Shadow*, they have committed the Keeping of
‘ their Souls unto ME, and as I engag’d for them in
‘ Covenant from Everlasting, when given me of my
‘ Father, and to them by my faithful Promise, when
‘ they resign’d themselves unto my Care, at the Time
‘ of their Espousals unto Me by Faith : I will not *lose*
‘ *them* ; None of their potent *Enemies*, neither Men
‘ nor Devils, no, nor their own Sins neither, shall
‘ pluck them *out* of my All-gracious and Almighty
‘ *Hands*. I will be *merciful* to their *Unrighteousness*,
‘ and *remember* their *Sins no more*. I will *subdue* their
‘ *Iniquities*, revive and increase their *Graces*, allure
‘ their Hearts unto ME, and open to them my Heart
‘ and Arms *afresh*, to receive their *returning Souls*.’

Thus, Sir, You see how Deadness and Inactivity
for God, at Times seifeth you, tho’ as a Believer,
you dwell under the Shadow of CHRIST : It is for
want of a *constant* Abiding in Him by Faith. You see
likewise, That tho’ sad is your Case, when you *depart*
from the *Lord* ; yet so great is his *Grace*, that He will
restore your *Soul* : So great is your Privilege by Pro-
mise, That you *shall return* ! Dwelling under his Sha-
dow *Habitually* ; You shall again dwell under his Sha-
dow *Actually* : and return’d from the Death of your
Backslidings, you shall again increase in Life, by re-
newed Quicknings. — For lo, your Privilege beneath
the Saviour’s Shade, is not only a *Return*, to the for-
mer Vigour and Strength of your Graces, but also to
a more *glorious Life*, and *abundant Fruit* and *Fragrancy*.
Returning, you shall *revive as the Corn* : Which after
it dies, and loseth its Beauty ; as a single Grain, in the
Earth, is quickned to the Glory of a springing Green-
ness,

ness, and of numerous Grains in one full Ear. You shall grow as the Vine: Which after a piercing cold Winter, by the reviving Summer-Sun speedily casts abroad its Branches, and with its tender Grapes, gives a good Smell. Yea, so fragrant shall you be in your full Fruits of Righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, to the Glory and Praise of God, that your Scent shall be as the Wine of Lebanon: Refreshing to the Heart of God and Man! — But a Hint or two I wou'd give to Ver. 8.

Ephraim shall say, *What have I to do any more with Idols? I have heard him and observ'd him: I am like a green Fir-Tree, from ME is thy Fruit found.* — In this we may observe, 1. That God's Shall, precedes Ephraim's I will: Ephraim shall say, *What have I to do any more with Idols? I will have no more to do with Idols.* 2. The actual Presence of what was future in Itself, to the Divine Mind: *I have heard him and observ'd him: Or, I now hear, and see with Pleasure, what Ephraim shall say and be hereafter.* And 3. The Spring and Cause of Ephraim's Bliss, in Christ, his Head of Grace: *I am like a green Fir-Tree, from ME is thy Fruit found:* As if the Lord should say, 'I am always green and flourishing, to represent, and refresh thee, when thou thro' Decay hast lost thy Beauty, and art weary. From ME, from mine immense Fulness of communicable Grace, is thy Fruit found: Both the Fruit of my Love, on which thou shalt feast with Joy, in my renewed Appearances for thee; and the Fruit of thy Faith, which thou shalt yield to my Praise, under the efficacious Influence of my All-sufficient Grace: Secur'd to Thee, they both are in ME.'

Hence, Sir, If your poor Soul is in a lifeless, indifferent Frame God-ward, if to your Grief you have
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forfaken the Lord, and gone after other Lovers, and if hereby you are fo weakned and wounded, that you have neither Skill nor Strength to return unto your Reft: O don't think you fhall be *left* in a State of *Distance*. The Lord your mighty Saviour, will again bring you *nigh*. The Virtue of his *Blood*, and the Power of his *Arm*, moft sweetly and ftrongly fecure your *Return*. Behold, your Deliverance, your Reftoration, unto full Salvation, is already engaged-for, by infinite Grace and Faithfulnefs: The Word is gone out of his Mouth, and he will not alter it, *Ephraim*, revolting *Ephraim*, fhall fay, *What have I to do any more, I will have to do no more with Idols*. Already the Lord *bears* and *observes* you; He fees and hears with Pleafure, what you *fhall* fay and be, under the renewed Influences of his *Grace-Power*. And lo, when under sad *Decays*, the Lord, your *Head* and *Life*, is then for you, a *green Fir-tree*, an Ever green, and flourishing Beauty, to represent, and reftore you; and from Him, from his inexhauftible Fulnefs of Grace, *your Fruit* is and fhall be found: To your unfpeakable Joy in *Him*, and to his prefent, and endless Praise by *you*!

Having thefe *Promifes* then, to encourage your Faith and Hope in God, Whenever you feel Deadnefs towards him, and Distance from him, attempt your *Duty* in returning to him. For tho' the Lord muft *draw us*, before we can *run to him*: Yet as God works by *Means*, and meets his People in boundlefs Mercy; while they wait for Him in the Paths of Duty; O ftir up yourfelf to feek God. *Seek* and you fhall *find*; *knock* and it fhall be *opened unto you*. Give the Lord no Reft, until He arife and have Mercy on you. He hath promifed to *increase* his People: (Their Life and Joy; after Death and Sorrow:) But yet for this He will

will be enquired of by the House of Israel, to do it for them : And as the Answer of their Prayer, He will fulfil his own Promise. Hark then, my dear Brother, what the Lord says to his People, and to you, whenever you feel Deadness towards him, and Distance from him : O Israel, return unto the LORD thy God ; for thou hast fallen by thine Iniquity. Take with you Words, and turn to the LORD, say unto Him, Take away all Iniquity, and receive us graciously : so will we render the Calves of our Lips. Ashur shall not save us, we will not ride upon Horses, neither will we say any more to the Work of our Hands, Ye are our gods : for in thee the Fatherless findeth Mercy, Ver. 1, 2, 3. Confess before the Lord, and bewail your Iniquity : Intreat his Mercy, to take it all away ; and a gracious Reception, upon your Return. That so you may give him Praise, forsake Idols, and cleave unto Him alone, in whom as Fatherless, Friendless and Helpless, from all the Creatures, you shall find Mercy. And lo, unto you, with his returning People, He will say, I will heal their Backslidings, I will love them freely : for mine Anger is turned away from Him. I will be as the Dew unto Israel, &c. Ver. 4, 5, 6. — That the Grace of Christ may thus be with your Spirit ; to make you grow and flourish in the Ways of God : is the hearty Desire of, dear Sir,

Your affectionate Friend and Servant,

L E T T E R LXVI. To — —

My very dear Sister in our precious Lord,

GOD will help you, and that right early. The Night is far spent, the Day is at Hand. Wait but

but a little while longer, and *your Sorrow* shall be *turned into Joy*. You wanted to have — and so did I, and took a deal of Pleasure in hoping it would be so. But what if the Lord designs to deliver you in a better Way, and unto greater Bliss, and also unto his greater Praise? Won't you rejoice in *that*? The *Government* is upon *Christ's Shoulder*: And most surely our dear Lord hath done, and will do all Things *so well*, that we cannot wish to have any Thing *better*, than it is, and shall be. Why should we, *silly Children*, be our own Chusers? Our own Carvers? Shou'd we not thereby lessen our Portion? And wound ourselves? Since we have a *Father*, that is infinitely wise and tender, careful and faithful, whose Goodness knows no Bounds, and whose Provisions made for us, are according to his *State*, and worthy of his Great SELF; let us say in Faith and Love, in the greatest filial Duty, with an holy Cheerfulness, for his Honour and our own Joy: *Choose THOU our Inheritance for us*.—That *all Grace may abound towards you*, until you are filled with *all Glory*: is the sincere Desire of, my dear Sister,

Yours most affectionately,

F I N I S.

E R R A T A.

PAGE 13, Line 21, for *as*, read *if*. p. 20, l. 27, after *only*, for *in*, r. *is*. p. 24, l. 25, for *knows*, r. *know*. p. 26, l. 26, for *speak*, r. *seek*. p. 38, l. 6, for *Dress*, r. *Distress*. p. 59, l. 12, for *chose*, r. *chosen*. p. 82, l. 1, for *assert*, r. *asserts*. p. 120, l. 27, after *to*, r. *be*. p. 141, l. 26, after *Grace*, r. *and*.

A
S E R M O N

Occasioned by the Sudden

D E A T H
O F

The REVEREND and LEARNED
ZEPHANIAH MARRYAT, D.D.

P R E A C H E D

In SOUTHWARK, September the 22d.

By T H O M A S H A L L.

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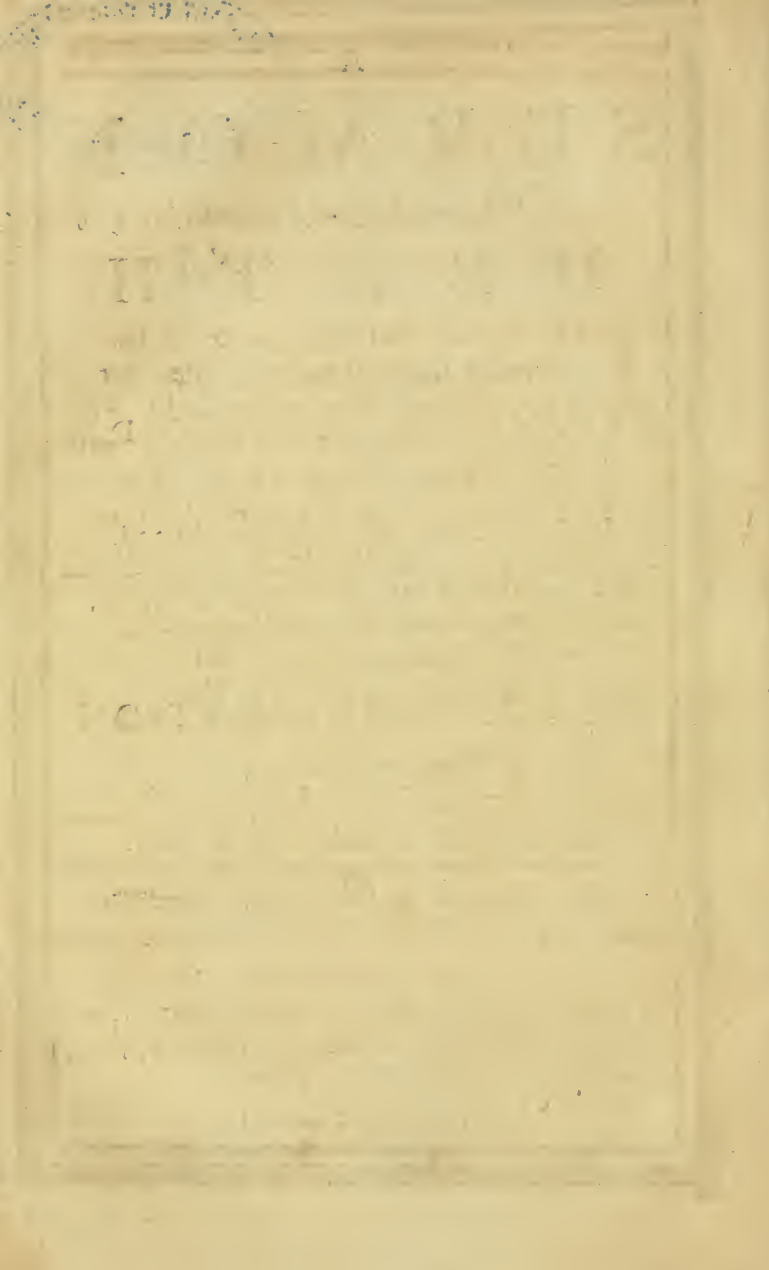
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LUKE xii. 43.

*Blessed is that Servant, whom his Lord,
when he cometh, shall find so doing.*

THE mournful Appearance of this Assembly shews it to be needless for me, to declare what melancholy Providence has given Occasion for my discoursing upon these Words at this Time. It is more necessary I should remind you of the Privilege of Believers, in that they may find something in the Word of GOD, wonderfully adapted for their Support under the most grieving Event that can befall them: For it is therein written, that *all Things work together for Good, to them that love GOD, to them who are the Called according to his Purpose (a).*

Fresh Instances of our Mortality daily occur; yet in general we are little affected with them. But by the *Death* of serious useful *Christians*, and of eminently laborious and serviceable *Ministers* of our Acquaintance, a very sensible Conviction is frequently renewed, that *all Flesh is as Grass (b)*; that *our Fathers have no Abiding (c)*; and that *the Prophets do not live for ever (d).*

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(a) Rom. viii. 28.
xxix. 15.

(b) 1 Pet. i. 24;
(d) Zech. i. 5.

(c) 1 Chron.

However, under these afflictive Dispensations, we have various Arguments to comfort us. One is, an Assurance that *the Word of the Lord abideth for ever* (e); and particularly, that CHRIST, the essential WORD, is always *the same* (f); that He *walketh in the Midst of the golden Candlesticks* (g), to observe the State and supply the Wants of his Churches: And when *one Angel* is called away, He can quickly send *another*, that the Word of the Gospel may be continually preached through a Succession of faithful Ministers.

But though what I have now mentioned be the grand Support of a Believer, yet there is another very mollifying and quieting Consideration, which upon the present Occasion may very justly, and with a remarkable Propriety, be urged to alleviate the Sorrow of the surviving Christian Friends and dear Relatives of the Deceased. And this is taken from *the Blessedness* of them *that die in the Lord*, who *rest from their Labours* (h), and to whom *an Entrance is ministred abundantly into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ* (i).

And where have we known Instances of any among our own Acquaintance, whether in a private or publick Character, who, when they departed, have left us a plainer Testimony of their *dying in the Lord*, than what was given by *that Servant of Christ* whose Death we are now lamenting? For the Deceased, under the
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(e) 1 Pet. i. 25.

(f) Heb. xiii. 8.

(g) Rev. ii. 1.

(h) Rev. xiv. 13.

(i) 2 Pet. i. 11.

most sensible and solemn Views of the near Approach of Death, often expressed a full Assurance that *he was going to Heaven*: Yea, he was so ready and desirous to be gone, that he sometimes signified, he should have been *uneasy to be detained*, but for his dutiful Submission to the Will of his Heavenly Father, and the Prospect and Hope that by his longer Abode, and patient Continuance in his Master's Work here, he might through the Divine Blessing be a happy Instrument of engaging others to *go with him*, or of exciting them to prepare to *come quickly after him*.

With respect then to Those, who have been *set as Seals* to the Divine Truths which he preached, and who through Grace were either *converted*, or after Conversion were greatly *edified* and comforted under his evangelical Ministry, though they cannot but deeply lament *their own heavy Loss*, yet they must allow, they have Reason to rejoice in *his unspeakable Gain*.—Especially when they consider, that in the very *Manner of his Removal* he was favoured with a special and remarkable *Answer to his own Prayers*. For he had often expressed a great Desire, that if it pleased God *his Life might not be lengthened beyond his Capacity for some Usefulness*. And this Request, it has been observed, he presented at the Footstool of the Throne of Grace, more frequently, and with greater Importunity of late than ever.—His Petition herein was granted. For after he had been employed on the *Morning of the last Sabbath*

bath in *preaching Christ* publickly and with great *Vivacity upon Earth*, he was *before Night* called hence to *praise Him* with the most raised *Affection in Heaven*. And who can conceive the *Triumph and Joy*, which must attend such a delightful *Change*, when *sudden Death* is *sudden Glory*!

Our present Duty is to consider, what suitable *Improvement* we should make of *this awful Stroke*. It must be acknowledged to be a Matter of the greatest Importance, that *we be ready also*; as there can otherwise be no Room for an Expectation, that we shall share in that *Honour*, which the *Parable* declares shall at last be the *Blessedness* of every good *Steward*, but not of any else.

Here perhaps the like *Question* with that which *Peter* put to *Christ (k)*, may be started by some to this Purpose, *viz.* “Does what is here said concerning the *Honour* of the *faithful Steward*, relate to *Ministers only*, or even unto *others*?”

By a careful Attention to the *Context*, I humbly conceive, it will appear, that the *Advancement* here foretold belongs to *all GOD's faithful Servants*, whatever be their present Station in the Church, whether as *Ministers*, or *People*.

Yet because the *Ministers of the Gospel* are in a particular and emphatical Manner termed *Stewards of the Mysteries of GOD*, and it peculiarly or eminently belongs to their Office to
feed

feed the People with Knowledge and Understanding, hence some may be ready to think, that the Case in the *Parable* is applicable to *Ministers only*.

But we may observe, that *Christ* is here speaking *parabolically*, and thus teaching what *Dignity* and *Honour* shall at last be conferred upon *the faithful Steward*; of whom it is declared, that though he be not now, yet hereafter he shall be made *Ruler over his Lord's Household*, to give them their *Portion of Meat in due Season* (l). And in this figurative Language, we have a beautiful but general Description of the *Advancement* and *Glory*, which the *faithful Disciples of Christ* shall receive in the future State.

This, I apprehend, is the just Light, in which this Passage should be viewed. And thus it sets forth a *Reward* that is *future*, without having any direct or immediate Reference to the *particular Work* or special Business itself, about which *the faithful Steward* is at present employed.

The Design of the *Parable* then is to instruct us, that *every Christian*, whether in a publick or private Station, who now serves the LORD with Diligence and Faithfulness, shall be richly rewarded in the World above, and be there raised to some very honourable and signal Pre-ferment. As when *Joseph* was advanced, he was set over *Pharaoh's House*, and over all the *Land of Egypt* (m): In like Manner, every

Servant

Servant of GOD who now faithfully employs the *Talents* committed to him, whether they be many or few, shall at last *be made Ruler over many Things* (*n*); yea, in the *Verse* after the *Text* it is said, *His Lord will make him Ruler over all that He hath.*

And thus a strong Assurance is given us of the *Blessedness* of all *Those*, who upon the strictest Search at their *Lord's Coming* shall be found to have acted an upright, conscientious, and faithful Part in the *Matters of their GOD.*

From the Words thus opened, as they stand in a Connection with the *Context*, I might justly enlarge upon *many Heads*: But by Reason of the Limits of the present Discourse, I can only touch upon *these Four.*

I. That *every Man* has *some Talent* given him by the Great God, to be employed to the Divine Glory.—This is supposed in the *Parable* where the *Text* lies, and is clearly taught by *our Lord* in another (*o*).

II. That by the Grace of God *some* are made *faithful Servants.* — These are the *bles-
sed Persons* here intended in the *Text* itself.

III. That *present Faithfulness* to God is a sure Prefage of *future Blessedness.* — For every *faithful Servant* is here pronounced infallibly *blessed.*

IV. That

(*n*) Mat. xxv. 21, 23.

(*o*) Mat. xxv. 14, & seq.

IV. That it is a special Privilege, when any *Servant of the Lord* is favoured with a *Capacity* of attending upon *publick Worship*, and engaging in the *Work and Service of the Lord*, until the Day of his Death. — *Blessed is that Servant, whom his Lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing.*

These are weighty Subjects, fit for the Pulpit at any Time; but are peculiarly seasonable upon this very solemn and awful Occasion. Let us consider then the Points that have been offered, and observe,

I. That *every Man* has *some Talent* given him by the great GOD, to be employed to the Divine Glory.

There is indeed a vast *Variety*, as to the Kind, Measure, and Number of *the Talents*, with which different Persons are intrusted. — But here I must observe, what is generally too little regarded, (*viz.*) That at the first Creation of Man, *many* precious and invaluable *Talents* were committed to us *in common*, and lodged with *Adam*, as the *federal Head*, as the constituted and publick *Representative* of all his Posterity: But by Reason of our Relation to him, *through his Apostacy* our happiest *Privileges*, even the Rectitude of our Nature, with its Capacity to worship God aright, and to hold a friendly, holy, and delightful Communion with him, were *utterly lost*

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beyond

beyond all Recovery by the best Endeavours of any meer Creature. Yea, a *Forfeiture* was incurred of the *Blessing* of every *Privilege*, which, through the Divine Forbearance, upon any Consideration, was still continued to us. So that with Regard to any holy and proper Use, that in our present *fallen State* we can make of *any of the Talents* originally given to our Nature, the *Guilt* of their having been squandered away and embezzled is justly *chargeable upon every Man*, that was comprehended and included in the *Covenant* made with *Adam*; as all his Progeny were.—And it is a very melancholly Evidence of a *sad Defection* from the Truths of *Divine Revelation*, and the good old *Protestant Faith*, that there are now *many* in the Land, who pretend that *we* are not *concerned in*, and cannot therefore be *culpable for*, the wicked *Embezzlement* of our *first Father*, and common Parent. Thus it is in some other Cases: For the *Children of Traitors* seldom care to acknowledge, or hear of, *the Taint of their Blood*.

The Vanity of such is manifest from the Assurance which the *Scripture* gives us, that by *one Man's* (even *Adam's*) *Disobedience* and Unfaithfulness, others, yea *many* others, even all his Offspring, *were made Sinners* (p). And were it so, that we had to account for the *Misimprovement* of no other *Talents*, but those which we *sinned away in Adam*, yet, without an *Interest in Christ*, we should be *condemned* at the Judgment of the great Day; and must then *suffer the Punishment* which
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the righteous Sanction of *the Law* requires to be inflicted upon a *Steward*, in the Balance of whose Accounts there is an *utter Deficiency*, occasioned by the basest Injustice and vilest Iniquity committed against his heavenly Lord and Master, the great Proprietor, and Supreme Governor of all. —Happy they, who by the Spirit of God are deeply *convinced of these Things* in a humbling Manner, according to the Instructions of his Word! And happy sure are they, who are enabled to lay to Heart *this original Unfaithfulness* of our Nature, so as gladly to *flee to Christ*, to hide them from the Guilt and Imputation of it!

But however too many, through the Blindness, Pride, and Hardness of their Hearts, dare to *dispute* or *deny* the Scripture-Doctrine of *the Fall of Man*; yet it must be allowed by all, that *every Individual*, who is spared till he can *discern betwixt his Right-Hand and his Left*, does personally receive *some Talents*, for which he is accountable to his Maker.—And as to *ourselves*, whatever our Extract or Education has been, we must acknowledge, that *many are the Talents* which we receive at the Hand of GOD: Though these are given *to every Man according to his several Ability (q)*, as the Lord sees fit.

I may here point you, to *Life* itself, to our *natural Capacities*, and to our *Opportunity of learning* the Knowledge and Fear of the Lord; yea, though it were only from the Books of Creation and Providence.

For if any were trained up, whether at Home or Abroad, in such an ignorant and dark Way, that they had not *the Knowledge of GOD's Law* as written in the Bible; yet they had *the Work of the Law* so far written in their Hearts, and by Reason of their very Formation and daily Protection they were so much *a Law unto themselves* (r), as rendered all their Disobedience, Wickedness, and Rebellion against God, utterly *inexcusable*.

But I presume the most, if not all here present, were born in a *Christian Land*, and educated in the *Christian Faith*. Many therefore are the precious *Talents*, with which we have been intrusted. — Such, for Instance, were the *early Instructions* given us by our *religious Parents*, or *pious Masters*, in our younger Days: And such have been our many Years Enjoyment of *peaceable Sabbaths*; our *Liberty* of stately attending the *Worship of GOD*, and the pure Administration of Gospel-Ordinances, in the *publick Assemblies* of his People; and the *Liberty* likewise, of joining in *social Worship* in the *Family*, as well as of performing the *secret Duties* of Religion in the *Closet*, or Places of Retirement.

These are the valuable *Talents*, which have been put into the Hands of those, whose *merciful Lot* it has been, to dwell in *religious Families*. And has not this been the Privilege of many of us, ever since we can remember?

Farther,

Farther, among our *Talents* must be reckon-
ed, *all the Advantages* which attend our *temporal*
Condition, or outward Circumstances in Life;
Our Health and Strength, the free Exercise of
our intellectual Powers, the Peace and Plenty,
the Safety and Comforts which we enjoy; and
all the various Relations in Life in which Provi-
dence has placed us, together with all the Op-
portunities that arise from them, either of re-
ceiving or doing Good.

Yea, of this Number we must also reckon *all*
the Attainments and Abilities, which may help
to make us a Blessing to the *Church*, useful to
Civil Societies, or any way serviceable to our
Fellow-Creatures. All these Advantages, Gifts,
or Allotments of Providence, are placed to our
Account by the great God, the Author and
Donor of them all, as *Talents* with which we
are bound to honour Him.

And the same must be said of *all afflictive*
Dispensations, designed and suited to *purge away*
our Tin and Dross (s), and to make us abound
in *the peaceable Fruits of Righteousness*.

But who can pretend to reckon up *all his* par-
ticular *Receipts* from the Father of Mercies? —
Happy the Persons, who with their *many Ta-*
lents do receive *the Spirit of Grace*, that they
may be enabled to profit by all! For *if any Man*
have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His (t);
nor can he be *that faithful and wise Steward*,
who shall meet with *his Lord's Approbation* at his
Coming.

(s) Isai. i. 25.

(t) Rom. viii. 9.

Coming. This will be shewn particularly under the next Head, in which it was observed,

II. That by the Grace of GOD *some* are made *faithful Servants*.

That *all* who are called *GOD's Servants* are not *faithful*, I might instance in *Nebuchadnezzar (u)*, and some others : But the *Parable* supposes, that there are *some* to whom this Character belongs ; yet it intimates, that their Number is but small. The *Interrogatory* Mode of Expression which *our Lord* uses in the *Verse before the Text*, directs us to look upon the *faithful Steward*, as one distinguished from others, or as one that *feared GOD above many (w)* : And when *Christ* says in the Text, *Blessed is that Servant*, this shews him to be a Man greatly beloved, *highly favoured*, and blessed of GOD. And thus it is suggested, that it was to be ascribed entirely to the *Grace and Favour of GOD*, that he became *faithful*.

Under this Head I shall attempt two Things.

1. I shall open the *Character* of the *Servant* that is *faithful* to his GOD. And then,
2. Shew, that it is by the *Grace of GOD* that any Man is *enabled* to answer this *Character*.

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(u) Jer. xxv. 9. xxvii. 6. xliii. 10.

(w) Neh. vii. 2.

By these it will appear, who is the *faithful Servant*, and how it is that he *becomes so*.

I. I shall open the *Character* of the *Servant* that is *faithful* to GOD.

Here I think it may be some Help, to consider in general the *Character* of a *Servant*, that is reckoned *faithful* to an *earthly Master*.——He is one, that is strictly just and honest, that will neither wrong his Master himself, nor agree or consent that he should be wronged by others.——He is one, who in all Things sincerely aims to be true to his Trust, and who, to the best of his Understanding, and the utmost of his Ability, carefully pursues his Master's Interest, and duely seeks his Credit and Reputation.——He keeps close to his Instructions, and makes his Master's Will the Rule and Measure of his Conduct, in the Management of his Business.——He resolutely shuns what his Master forbids, and in all Things lawful chearfully complies with what his Master requires.

Now these Hints may fitly be applied to the Temper and Carriage required in the *Servant*, that is to be accounted *faithful* to his *heavenly Master*. And they shew us,—that he is one, who is humbly, sincerely, and entirely *devoted* to the *Worship* and *Fear* of GOD (x):——One, that serves Him *with a perfect Heart*, and *with a willing Mind* (y):——One, that studies
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(x) Psal. cxix. 38.

(y) 1 Chron. xxviii. 9.

to know *His holy Will* and Pleasure; and to this End bears, reads, and meditates upon *His Word*, praying daily for an enlightened Mind, and a renewed Understanding.——He is one, that will not designedly, or knowingly, do any Iniquity; but has a constant *Respect unto all God's Commandments*, that he may keep his *Precepts diligently* (a); aiming in all Things to do that which is right and well-pleasing in His Sight, from Gospel-Principles and to holy Ends; and making it his Care, that *whatsoever he does in Word or Deed, he do all in the Name of the Lord Jesus*, to the Praise and Glory of God by Him (a).

He then is *the faithful and wise Servant*, who makes a right Use of the *Gospel-Revelation*, and who, according to the Instruction and Command thereof, receives *Christ Jesus the Lord* (b), holding Him to be his *Head of Righteousness*, his *Head of Government*, and *Head of Influence*; and stedfastly adheres to Him in all his *mediatorial Characters*, as the *Great Prophet, Priest, and King* of the Church.

Agreeably hereunto, the *Character* of a *faithful Servant* may be more particularly viewed under Three Articles.——He renounces the *Guidance* of all *human Wisdom* in Matters of Religion:——He relinquishes all *Expectation* and *Hope of Salvation* by his own *personal Obedience*: And,——He is constantly afraid of *holding the Truth in Unrighteousness* (c).

(1.) He

(a) Psal. cxix. 4, 6.

(b) Col. ii. 6.

(a) Col. iii. 17.

(c) Rom. i. 18.

(1.) He renounces the *Guidance* of all *human Wisdom* in the Matters of Religion.

He would have all the carnal Reasonings and *vain Imaginations* of Men *cast down*, with every *high Thing* that *exalteth itself* against the *Knowledge of GOD*; and would have every *Thought* brought into *Captivity* to the *Obedience of Christ* (d). Upon Him he waits for *Light*, *Counsel*, and *Instruction*, and for the gracious *Anointing* and *Teaching of His Spirit*, to *guide him into* the *Knowledge* and *Practice* of all heavenly and saving *Truth* (e); and would receive every *Divine Truth* upon the sole *Authority* of his heavenly *Master*. As he will not *lean to his own Understanding* (f), so neither will he *call any Man upon Earth* *Rabbi*, or *Father* (g). He cannot allow himself to pay any *Regard* to the *Authority* of *Synods*, *Councils*, or *Fathers*, in any *Point* of *Faith*, *Worship*, or *Obedience*, when they *speak not according to the Divine Law and Testimony* (h): But having given the *Word of Christ* a *Place* in his *Heart*, he *speaks the Truth in Love* (i), and *earnestly contends for the Faith*, which was once *delivered to the Saints* (k) by the *Apostles* and *Prophets* of old, and through the wonderful *Goodness* of the *LORD* is

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(d) 2 Cor. x. 5.

(f) Prov. iii. 5.

(h) Ifai. viii. 20.

(k) Jude, *ver.* 3.

(e) John xvi. 13.

(g) Mat. xxiii. 9.

(i) Eph. iv. 15.

to this Day handed down to us in the *Scriptures*.

(2.) He relinquishes all Expectation and *Hope of Salvation* by his own *personal Obedience*.

He desires, and endeavours, to *become dead to the Law* as a Covenant for Life, and would gladly be married to another, even to *Christ who was raised from the Dead* (l): For he has learnt, that without a conjugal and vital Union with Him, no Man can bring forth any Fruit unto GOD, that would be acceptable; since without Faith it is impossible to please Him (m).

He is convinced of the Truth and Righteousness of that *Divine Sentence*, which pronounceth, *Cursed is every one who continueth not in all Things which are written in the Book of the Law, to do them* (n). And being conscious that he has been a Transgressor, he dares not now trust to any Works or Righteousness of his own, for his Justification or Acceptance at the Bar of GOD: No, not to his Faith or Love, to his Repentance or new Obedience; nor to any inherent Righteousness, of which he himself can be the Subject, even after he has been renewed or born again. Yea, though his Graces be truly sincere, and his Works really evangelical, spiritual, and holy, yet he dare no more trust to these, than to any external

(l) Rom. vii. 4.

(n) Gal. iii. 10.

(m) Heb. xi. 6.

external *legal Righteousness*, whether it be Cere-
monial or Moral.

He knows, that how diligently or exactly so-
ever the *Duties* of Religion may be performed,
or how far soever a Man's *Works* of Justice and
Virtue, of universal Benevolence and Charity,
may be extended, they can *avail nothing* to the
Justification of his Person before God: That
though he should bestow all his Goods to feed the
Poor, and *though* for the general Good of his
Country, or some signal Service and Advantage
to his Christian Brethren, *he should give his Body*
to be burned (o), yet without *Love to Christ*,
and an entire *Trust in Him*, as the *End of the*
Law for Righteousness (p), all his *Doing* and
Suffering would *profit him Nothing*. For he is
fully assured, that after his utmost *Endeavours*,
and the most powerful *Assistance* which in the
present State can be expected *from above*, still
after all *his own personal Obedience* neither will
nor can come up to the *absolute Perfection* which
the *Law* requires.

Nay farther, were it possible for him, from
the Day of his Conversion or the Change of his
State, to perform an *Obedience* that is *completely*
perfect, and to *do all that is commanded*, notwith-
standing all this *he would be an unprofitable Ser-*
vant, who had *done that only which was his Du-*
ty to do (q): And his After-Obedience could
never justify him from the Sins he had commit-

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ted,

(o) 1 Cor. xiii. 3.

(q) Luk. xvii. 10.

(p) Rom. x. 4.

ted, or the Guilt he had contracted, before his Conversion.

Nor can any Man justly be accounted a *faithful Steward*, who has not made such an Improvement of the supernatural *Revelation* which God has graciously sent us, as to *renounce all Hopes* of Salvation by his own *Obedience*; acknowledging, that it is in the *LORD JESUS CHRIST*, the incarnate *SON* of *GOD*, and in *HIM* alone, that the Believer can find that absolutely perfect and infinitely *meritorious Righteousness*, in which *all Israel shall be justified, and shall glory (r)*, while *he that believeth not, shall be damned (s)*.

But I must farther remark concerning the *faithful Servant*, that as I said before,

(3.) He is constantly afraid of holding the *Truth in Unrighteousness*.

He dreads this above all Things: He dreads it *at his very Heart*. He esteems no Condition of any Person upon Earth to be *worse*, than that of the Man who is left to *commit this Abomination*. He sees it to be such a notorious Wickedness, that *the Wrath of GOD from Heaven* is particularly and most expressly *revealed against it (t)*. And for this Reason, the *Servant* that is *faithful* does peremptorily *renounce the hidden Things of Dishonesty (u)*; and solemnly revoking and sincerely repenting of his former *Agree-*

(r) Ifai. xlv. 24, 25.

(t) Rom. i. 18.

(s) Mark xvi. 16.

(u) 2 Cor. iv. 2.

Agreement with Sin and Hell, he now cleaves to the Lord his GOD with full Purpose of Heart (w), and will not allow any other Lords to have Dominion over him (x). He cannot consent, that Sin should reign in his mortal Body, that he should obey it in the Lusts thereof: But being made free from Sin, and become a Servant to GOD, he endeavours to have his Fruit unto Holiness (y), that GOD may be glorified. And with this View, he seeks not his own Things, but the Things which are Jesus Christ's (z).

He openly, and from his Heart, avows CHRIST to be the sole King of the Church, and would gladly be subdued to Him entirely; resolving in His Strength to observe all Things whatsoever He has commanded (a), and being desirous to honour Him even as he honours the Father (b). Accordingly he conscientiously endeavours to keep pure and entire all such religious Worship and Ordinances, as He hath appointed in His Gospel. He practically renounces all the Blasphemies which are committed by the avowed Enemies of CHRIST, both Jews and Mahometans, and all the Idolatries practised even in Popish as well as Pagan Countries, with all the Abominations, Superstition, and Corruptions, countenanced by the Whore of Babylon.—Nor dare he submit to any National Establishment, which he does not find authorized or warranted by the Word of GOD: And in his Judgment it is an incontestable

(w) Acts xi. 23.

(y) Rom. vi. 12, 22.

(a) Mat. xxviii. 20.

(x) Isai. xxvi. 13.

(z) Phil. ii. 21.

(b) John v. 23.

incontestable Principle, that *it cannot be right in the Sight of GOD, to hearken unto Men, more than unto GOD (c).*

Now by a serious Reflection upon what has been delivered under the Three preceeding Remarks, does it not sufficiently appear, that a Man cannot justly be reckoned *a Faithful and Wise Servant*, unless he be *a faithful Disciple of JESUS CHRIST?*

Having thus opened the *Character* of a *faithful Servant*, I shall now,

2. Shew, that it is *by the Grace of GOD alone*, that any Man can be *able* to answer *this Character*.

If he that is a *faithful Servant* must answer the *Character* which has now been given, as the *Scriptures* plainly evince, the *Question* then is, “Where shall a *faithful Servant* be found?”

Had your excellent *Doctor* been the Person to have given the *Answer* to this *Question*, I am ready to think, that in his familiar, but striking and pungent Way of Speaking, he would at once, as justly he might, have told you plainly, “That by Reason of *the Fall* we are become “such a Company of vile wicked Wretches, “that there is *not a good Servant* to be found.” No, among all the Sons and Daughters of *Adam* in their apostate Condition, there is *not one* to be found, that is fit for the Service of GOD, or who will be *faithful* to our heavenly Master; *not one,*

one, who naturally cares for His Worship, or that chuses to fear and serve the LORD. For there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after GOD : They are all gone out of the Way, they are together become unprofitable, there is none that doth Good, no not one (d).

This is the Account, which by the Direction of GOD *Paul* quotes in his *Epistle* to the *Romans*, from a *Psalms* that was wrote by the immediate Inspiration of the Spirit of GOD. And under the same infallible Teaching the *Apostle* proceeds still farther, and assures us in the same *Epistle*, that Men are naturally so far from being inclined or disposed to *serve the Lord in Sincerity and Truth*, in Righteousness and Uprightness, as *David* did, that their *carnal Mind is Enmity against GOD (e).*

And from this *Enmity against GOD* so strongly asserted, we may justly and very pertinently to our present Purpose infer, that a Man cannot be his *faithful Servant*, unless he be made a *Partaker of a new, divine, and holy Nature*. Now there cannot be a *new Nature*, without a *new Creation* ; and there is no *new Creation*, but by the *Grace of GOD* in *CHRIST JESUS*.

Thus then it appears from this *Scriptural Way of Reasoning*, that it is by the *Grace of GOD* any are made *faithful*.—And as a farther Confirmation of this important Truth, I cannot forbear turning you to that remarkable Passage in *Rev. xvii. 14.* where we have a Description of *those that are with the Lamb* ; who
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(d) Rom. iii. 11, 12.

(e) Rom. viii. 7.

are distinguished by *Three Appellations* peculiar to themselves, being declared to be Persons, who are *called, and chosen, and faithful*. Upon which Words I humbly conceive it is just and proper to observe distinctly,

That none will openly and boldly, or steadfastly and heartily, stand on the Side of *the Lamb*, pleading for the Purity of the Faith, Worship, and Obedience of the Gospel, against the Superstition, Corruption, and Errors of the Wicked, but His true Disciples and *faithful* Followers.

Again, we may observe, that none can act this faithful Part, but they who have been *effectually called* by the special, supernatural, and efficacious Grace of the infinitely blessed and holy Spirit.

And farther, that none are at any Time thus called, but they who from Eternity have been *chosen in Christ*, and were the Objects of *the Father's* rich, free, discriminating and unchangeable Love in Him.

From this instructive Description of *those with the Lamb*, we may learn, that whoever are found *faithful* to their heavenly LORD, their *Faithfulness* springs originally from the *electing Love* of the Father, and is the proper and immediate Effect of the *Spirit's Work* upon the Heart.——When we consider therefore the original Spring and Fountain, with the proper immediate and efficient Cause, of the *Faithfulness* of Believers, we must acknowledge, that it is by *the Grace of GOD* that any Man becomes
such

such a *faithful and wise Servant* as the *Text* refers to.

To conclude this Head, I shall only add, that as it must be allowed, that none can be *faithful* but those who are *holy*, so none can be *holy* who *fail of the Grace of GOD*.

I now pass on to the next general Head, under which I am to shew,

III. That *present Faithfulness* is a sure Presage of *future Blessedness*.

The *Parable* teaches us, that every *faithful and wise Steward* shall be made *Ruler over his Lord's Household*. This denotes the great *Dignity and Honour*, which in the future State *Christ* will confer upon *all his faithful Servants*, both *Ministers and People*. And the *Text* itself pronounces *that Servant blessed*, who is found *faithful at his Lord's Coming*.

We may justly conclude therefore, that *Grace* never makes any *faithful*, but with a Design to crown them with *Glory*. Such as *God foreknew*, and *loved with an everlasting Love*, He did *predestinate to be conformed to the Image of his Son (f)*. And there are Two Things in particular, wherein *all the Saints* shall in their Measure bear a *Conformity* to the *Son of GOD*: These are *His Faithfulness*, and *His Glory*.

Upon the Account of *Christ's Faithfulness*, He is termed *God's righteous Servant (g)*. And such is the Redeemer's Care over all whom He

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has

has ransomed, that notwithstanding their *natural Enmity* against GOD, their manifold Difficulties, and innumerable Defects and Imperfections, He does so effectually and thoroughly renew them, as to *render them faithful*, whatever be the Service in which He employs them : As He did *Paul*, when He *put him into the Ministry* (b).

And they that are now *conformed* to the Image of *Christ* in *Faithfulness*, so far as their Capacities will admit of it, are certainly assured, they shall hereafter be *conformed* to it likewise in *Glory*. For as He *overcame*, and is *set down with His Father in His Throne*, so to all who through Grace are enabled to *overcome* the Temptations, that are any way offered to make them unfaithful, will *Christ* grant to *sit with Him in His Throne* (i); where they shall be crowned with all the *Glory* and *Honour*, and receive all the *Felicity* and *Blessedness*, that can result from their having *Christ Himself* to be *their GOD*, or from their being treated by Him, *not as Servants*, but as *His Sons* : And He being *GOD over all Blessed for ever* (k), He will assuredly make all his Sons to *inherit all Things* (l), even all that can be desired to consummate their Happiness, and make it every Way absolutely compleat and full. Our Lord then having expressly *promised this*, the Certainty and Infallibility of *His Promise* does inviolably establish an inseparable Connection between *present Faithfulness* and *future Blessedness*.

I shall

(b) 1 Tim. i. 12.

(k) Rom. ix. 5.

(i) Rev. iii. 21.

(l) Rev. xxi. 7.

I shall now consider the last general Head proposed, *viz.*

IV. That it is a special Privilege, when any *Servant of the Lord* is favoured with a *Capacity* of attending upon *publick Worship*, and engaging in the *Work and Service of the Lord*, until the *Day of his Death*.

Here we may take Notice, that *Feeding the Household* is a Work of a *publick Nature*, and *giving them their Portion of Meat in due Season* is an Instance of *Faithfulness*. The Reddition therefore in the Text [*so doing*] may justly be taken as signifying, that there is a *Blessedness* in the *Servant's* being found in like Manner *faithfully* and actively engaged in some *publick Service* at the Time of *his Lord's Coming*.—And since one remarkable Instance of *Christ's Coming* to his People in all Ages before the End of the World, will be *at their Death*, we may warrantably take the Sense of the Words to be, *Blessed is that faithful Servant*, who shall be found actively and seasonably engaged in the stated *publick Worship* of God until the *Day of his Death*.

This Construction of the Text is very agreeable to some other Passages of Scripture: Particularly to *David's Request*, that he *might dwell in the House of the Lord all the Days of his Life (m)*; which implied a Desire, that he might *to the last* be favoured with an Opportunity and a Capacity for *publick Worship*.—And

his holy Thirst after Communion with GOD, and his fervent Zeal for the Divine Honour, made him *regret the Loss* of such Opportunities; as appears from his lamenting it, that while *the People were gathered together to serve the Lord, his Strength was weakened in the Way* (n).

We may conclude then, that there is a *Blessedness* in a *Servant's* being favoured with a *Capacity* for attending upon *publick Worship*; and a *Blessedness* in being found *faithfully* and actually engaged in it until the *Day of his Decease*.

But yet we are by no Means to imagine, that this *Blessedness* is absolutely *necessary* to the *Servant's future Happiness*. Such a Supposition would be a fore *Discouragement* to many of *Christ's faithful Ministers*, and many of *GOD's dear Children*, who may be *laid aside* from the *publick Service and Worship of GOD*, not for a few Sabbaths only, but perhaps for several Months or Years, *before their Death*.—In such a Case, it is our Duty to be chearfully *resigned* to the Disposal of our heavenly LORD, who will have some to be *His waiting Servants*, while others are *His working Servants*. And if we are so happy as to be *made accepted in the Beloved* (o), and received into *the Family of GOD*, there can be no Reason for any Complaint or Murmuring, though according to his holy and sovereign Pleasure He should station us among *His waiting Servants*, for what Time his infinite Wisdom shall judge most proper *for our Good* to his own Glory. For we may be equally

faithful

faithful and accepted in *suffering*, as in doing His Will.—And whatsoever be the Tribulation, which for any Space may unavoidably lay us under a *necessary Restraint* from *publick Worship*, GOD can abundantly make up *the Loss of this Privilege* some other Way. And it is enough for our Encouragement, when in a lively Exercise of Faith we remember *our Lord's Promise*, that He will freely and certainly give a *Crown of Life* to those, who carefully improve the Opportunities of publick Worship He affords them, and are *faithful unto Death* (p).

Having premised these Hints, I may now very justly and safely declare it to be a *blessed Privilege*, for a Believer to have the *Ability* of attending the *Worship of GOD* in the *publick Congregation* continued until the *Day of his Death*.

This Favour, it is plain, has been granted to *several* of the *Servants of GOD*. I may in particular mention *Aaron, the Saint of the Lord*, who no doubt was in a *Capacity* of performing the *Functions of his Office* in the House of GOD, upon the *Day* in which it was ordered, he should go up into the *Mount*, and be *stripped of his Garments*, and die there (q). — And of *Moses* also we read, that when he had made an End of pronouncing the *Blessing upon all Israel* in the publick Audience of the People, on that self-same Day the Lord spake unto him, saying, Get thee up unto *Mount Nebo*, and there die, and be gathered unto thy People (r).

And

(p) Rev. ii. 10.

(q) Numb. xx. 26, 28.

(r) Deut. xxxii. 48, — 50.

And even in our own Times some of the noted *Disciples of Christ* have been thus *suddenly removed*, at the *Command*, and as it were by the immediate *Hand of GOD*, without so much as *one Day's Confinement* from *publick Worship* immediately before their *Death*.—A very fresh and remarkable Instance of this you have had, in the *sudden Removal* of your honoured *Pastor*, who had the *Privilege* of attending *publick Worship* on the very *Day of his Death*.

Now the *Blessedness* of this *Privilege* may be considered distinctly in Two Branches.

1. There is a *Pleasure* in a Believer's being continued in a *Capacity* of joining in the *publick Worship* of *GOD* till the *last Part of his Life*.
2. There is an *Advantage* to be expected in his *being removed* immediately after he has been *faithfully engaged* therein.

These Considerations will sufficiently display the *Blessedness* of this *Privilege*.

1. There is a *Pleasure* in a Believer's being continued in a *Capacity* of joining in the *publick Worship* of *GOD* till the very *last Part of his Life*.

This *Privilege* is indeed a most valuable *Blessing*, not merely with Regard to some *temporal Considerations*, relating to the bodily *Health* and *Ease* which may be supposed to attend it, but

but upon many *spiritual Accounts* of the greatest Importance. And the *Christian's* high Regard to *publick Worship* ever makes him to esteem it as a *Pleasure* to attend upon it. For he knows, that tho' *God's gracious Presence* is not confined to the Ordinances of his House, yet *the Lord loveth the Gates of Zion, more than all the Dwellings of Jacob* (s). Every Gospel-Church is a *Zion, the City of God*; and *the Name* which he has appointed to be given it, is *JEHOVAH-SHAMMAH, the LORD is there* (t). And thro' the Divine Presence of the *LORD THE SPIRIT* in His mighty Power and Grace, many Souls have been there *regenerated* to a spiritual and divine Life, have been there fed with *the sincere Milk of the Word* (u), yea, have there learnt *the Certainty of the Words of Truth*, and been taught most *excellent Things* (w). And from the *Benefit* which they have received, they are encouraged to hope from Time to Time, that they shall there see more of *the Beauty of the Lord* (x), and of *the unsearchable Riches of Christ* (y); and shall there meet with such sweet and powerful *Communications of His Grace*, as shall increase their *Faith*, quicken their evangelical *Repentance*, confirm their *Hope*, and inflame their *Love* to *God*, and all the Duties of practical Religion and true Holiness. And there they expect to receive those *Instructions*, and those *Impressions*, which shall be useful and effectual to wean them from the *present evil World*, to fit them for *Death* and

(s) Psal. lxxxvii. 2. (t) Ezek. xlvi. 35. (u) 1 Pet. ii. 2.
(w) Prov. xxii. 20, 21. (x) Psal. xxvii. 4. (y) Eph. iii. 8.

and Judgment, and to prepare them for the heavenly Glory.

Now as *Citizens* and *Merchants* think it a *Privilege*, to be continued in those Circumstances of *Health* which will admit of their frequenting the *Exchange*, and other *publick Places*, where their *worldly Business* is to be transacted ; thus the *Believer* cannot but esteem it a *singular Favour*, to be spared in a State of such *Activity* and *Vi-gour*, that to the last Period of Life he may be able *with Pleasure* stately to attend those *publick religious Assemblies*, in which he hopes to enjoy the most profitable and delightful *Inter-course with Heaven*.

Besides, he esteems it a blessed *Privilege*, to have the Opportunity of *testifying* by an Attendance upon the *publick Worship* which the Gospel requires, *his humble Gratitude* for the great *Salvation* which the Gospel reveals. He *delights* by such Attendances to *exalt his Redeemer's Name*, and to pay an open, a dutiful, and manifest *Re-gard* to his LORD's *Authority*, in observing the Ordinances of His Appointment ; and in the *publick Use* thereof, according to His Command, to join in perpetuating the Memory of his *Saviour's Incarnation*, of His *Obedience unto Death*, and of His *Resurrection* ; that all around him may know, to whom *he* is, and to whom alone *they* should be looking for Salvation, even to *Jesus the Author and Finisher of our Faith* (z), who has *magnified the Law, and made it honourable* (a). Thus the Believer finds a *Pleasure* in his attending

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(z) Heb. xii. 2.

(a) Isai. xlii. 21.

ing upon *publick Ordinances* : So that in this respect, *Blessed is that Servant, whom his Lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing.*

And in particular, *The faithful Minister*, who delights in his Master's Work, cannot but esteem it a *signal Blessing* to be indulged to the very *End of Life* with an Ability of *appearing publickly*, according to his Commission, *in the chief Place of Concourse, in the opening of the Gates, and in the City (b)*, to utter the Word of the LORD ; that thro' the Divine Blessing he may be the *happy Instrument* of converting Sinners, and of establishing and comforting the Saints. And remarkably *blessed is that faithful Servant, whom his Lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing.* But again,

2. There is also some *Advantage* the Believer may expect, in his *being removed* immediately after he has been *faithfully engaging* in *publick Worship*.

The most happy *Advantages* for Eternity, result from *Communion with GOD* : And there is no where any greater Nearness of *Access unto Him* to be expected upon Earth, than in the *Ordinances* of His House, and a faithful *Attendance* upon His *publick Worship*. For when this is performed in a spiritual manner, according to the Gospel-Rule, the Believer there makes an humble Acknowledgment of *the Apostacy of our Nature*, with the consequent Guilt and Pollution which do universally attend it. There he

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makes a penitential Confession of *the Plague of his own Heart* (c), and of the innumerable aggravated Transgressions and sad Omissions of his Life. There he hears the wonderful Settlements of *the everlasting Covenant* opened and unfolded, and thereupon repeats his Application by Faith to *the Blood of Christ*; and with an humble and holy Confidence he there afresh lays hold of *the exceeding great and precious Promises* (d) which his GOD *has given him*, and on which He *hath caused him to hope*. There he renews his solemn *Self-dedication to GOD*, and his sincere *Renunciation* of all Friendship with the Enemies of his LORD. There he gets a fresh Taste of the *Divine Love*, and a fresh Sight of the *heavenly Glory*, with a sweet Confirmation of his *Hope*, that through the *Righteousness and Grace* of his *Redeemer* he shall quickly be made a Partaker of it: And *this Hope*, in Proportion to its high Degree, begets in him a vehement *Desire to depart* (e), that he may *be with Christ* in the Mansions above. —Now these are remarkable *Advantages*, which happily prepare and dispose the Soul to *meet Death with a Smile*.

But besides these, there are *further Advantages*, which in a peculiar Manner arise from a faithful *Attendance upon publick Worship*, and which cannot immediately flow from the nearest *Communion with GOD in secret*. —It is true in *secret Worship* every Believer, under the gracious and powerful Impressions of the *Holy Ghost*, does by the outward Expressions of his Mouth,

as

as well as in the inward Language of his Heart, declare unto *JEHOVAH, Father, Son, and Spirit, the Holy One of Israel*, that upon the most mature Deliberation, renouncing all Idols, he cordially and fixedly chuses Him to be *his Covenant-GOD and Father*, the only Object of his religious Worship and Adoration, and the Portion of his Soul for ever.—The Believer, I say, humbly and sincerely declares this *in secret* to the LORD Himself: But by his *publick Worship* performed according to the Rule of the Word, he *openly declares this* before all who are the Witnesses of his religious Attendances. Thus he bears a noble Testimony to the Reality, Excellence, and Glory of the *Gospel-Salvation*, and to the Suitableness and Divine Authority of a *Gospel-Worship*, and a *Gospel-Walk*. By every fresh Act of *Worship* in the House of God, he gives a fresh Evidence, that he accounts *the Ways of Wisdom* to be *Ways of Pleasantness*, and that *all her Paths are Peace* (f). And if his Life be free from those *Irregularities*, which would *contradict* his Profession or *sur* his Christian Character, he then by the Obedience of *his Worship* practically *condemns the World*, as *Noah* did (g), for all their Profaneness and Irreligion, their wretched Stupidity and carnal Security, for the Worldliness of their Temper, the Impenitence, Unbelief, and Hardness of their Hearts.

And is not a *Consciousness* of his having been excited, notwithstanding all Opposition from the Devil, the World, and the Flesh, to a *persever-*

ing Constancy in such a religious Conduct as this, an encouraging *Evidence* to his own Soul, that his GOD *knows him by Name*, and that he has *found Grace in his Sight* (*b*)? Especially, when with the Testimony of *his own Conscience* he has the secret Attestation of *the Spirit of Adoption*, that the *Worship* which he performs in the House of GOD, neither springs from any selfish or worldly Motive, nor is directed by *fleshy Wisdom* to any base sinister End, but that all is done *by the Grace of GOD* in a holy *Simplicity and godly Sincerity* (*i*), with a Design, that by keeping up the *Worship of the Sanctuary* he might not only honour GOD *himself*, but invite, encourage, and assist *others*, to *avouch the Lord to be their GOD* (*k*), to love and fear Him, to obey His Voice, and cleave to Him, as the only felicitating Object of their Souls, in the full Enjoyment of whom alone they can have eternal Life.

And when a *faithful Servant* has thus the Comfort of *knowing*, that after the Example of *Caleb and Joshua*, he has followed the Lord *fully* (*l*), Is he not then in a fit Condition to meet the *King of Terrors*, whatever shall be the *Season or Manner* of his Approach?

Or if the *Christian*, just after he has been in the *Mount with GOD*, even before he comes down into the *Vale of Temptation* again, should at once be discharged from a State of *Warfare*, and ordered to take his final Farewel of the *Church-Militant*, that while he is in such a heavenly

(*b*) Exod. xxxiii. 12, 17. (*i*) 2 Cor. i. 12. (*k*) Deut. xxvi. 17. (*l*) Numb. xiv. 24.

venly and comfortable Frame he may immediately go and join the *Church-Triumphant*, with what powerful Succours and wonderful *Advantages* does he then *meet Death*? If such a happy and *sudden Change* may not strictly be termed a *Translation*, yet it must be very near a-kin. For though the dying Believer *drops his Body*, as *Elijah* did his *Mantle* (m), still in a happy Sense it may truly be said of him, as it was of *Enoch*, that *He walked with GOD, and was not, for GOD took him* (n).

But that none of the Saints may be *discouraged*, though it should be their Lot to have a *lingring Death*, let it be remembered, that the Summit of the *Servant's Blessedness* arises not from the *Manner* of his Dismission from his Work, but from his receiving that transporting *Eulogium*, when CHRIST Himself shall say to him, *Well done, thou good and faithful Servant, enter thou into the Joy of thy Lord* (o). How painful or wasting therefore, or of how long a Continuance soever, were the Diseases of his Body, which prepared the Way, and by slow Degrees brought on his Dissolution, *Blessed notwithstanding shall that Servant be, at his Lord's Coming*.

Having thus considered the Heads at first proposed, I shall now draw to a Conclusion of this Discourse, by shewing what special *Improvement* we should make of them, in a Way of Personal *APPLICATION*.

The

The important Truths I have delivered point out various *Duties* and *Exercifes of Grace*, some whereof I shall briefly urge in the following Order.

1. We are called to a serious *Enquiry* into our own Case, and a close *Self-Examination*.

It is our Duty to enquire, *what Talents* we have received, *how* they have been *employed*, and whether we are prepared to give an *Account of our Stewardship* with Comfort.

Let me solemnly address myself to *You of this Congregation*. You have been *highly favoured* with a rich Enjoyment of the Means of Grace. It is *near Fifty Years* since some of this Church *first enjoyed* the ministerial Labours of the Deceased at *Zoar Street* : And none that sat under his Ministry, whether *there*, or in the *present Place* of your solemn Meetings, but must acknowledge, you have been intrusted with *many precious Talents*.

Think, Sirs, while *your Pastor* has been stat-
edly and diligently officiating among you one Sabbath after another for Years past, Was not every Ordinance a *Talent* ? every Sermon a *Talent* ? yea, and every Sentence which dropt from the *Lips* of one whose Mouth the Lord had touch-
ed, a valuable *Talent* committed to those that heard him ?

How

How vast then is the Sum of *your Talents*? and how awful must be *the Account* which you are to give? You cannot but know, that *a Day of Reckoning* is coming, and you must shortly be *called to an Account* by the Supreme *Judge* who *searcheth the Heart*, for all the *Convictions* about spiritual and eternal Things, that have at any Time been raised in your Minds under *his faithful Ministry*.——You must give *an Account*, what Use you have made of all the solemn *Warnings*, and awakening *Expostulations*, which he has opened to you *out of the Scriptures*; of all the kind, authoritative, and melting *Invitations*, which in the Name of the LORD he has given you; and of all the attracting *Declarations* of Salvation by CHRIST for humble Penitents and true Believers, which he has published agreeable to his Commission.——And further, you must also give *an Account*, what Return you have made, with Regard to the many *pressing Calls* to a humble *holy Walking* before God, with which *his judicious Ministry* did abound, while he was *testifying the Gospel of the Grace of GOD* among you.

Let me beseech you therefore to consider, that every one of *this Congregation* in particular, who refuses to *believe in Christ, and follow Him*, will at last be *condemned* in the most dreadful Manner, as an *unjust Steward*, as a most *slothful and wicked Servant*.——Again,

2. We are directed *what Method* we should take, that we may be *made faithful*.

Special and efficacious *Grace*, we have heard, is absolutely *necessary* to make us *faithful*. And none can warrantably expect to be *Partakers* of *this Grace*, who do not humbly *ask* and *seek* it at the Door of Mercy. This plainly teaches us *our Duty*, and directs us to *seek the Lord*, while he may be found, and to *call upon Him*, while he is near (*p*). He has declared, that He will give the *Holy Spirit* unto them that *ask him* (*q*): And it is certain, that if any Man have not the *Spirit of Christ*, he is none of His (*r*), none of His *faithful Servants*. Wait therefore for the *Promise of the Father*, and make it your Request, that He would *quicken you by His Spirit*. — Be fully assured, my Friends, that the Person who *has not the Spirit*, is *sensual* (*s*), and cannot be *faithful*: And the Man that is *prayerless* at his LORD's Coming, cannot be found doing as his LORD required. None of you can pretend, that in this Point you *know not the Will* of your LORD: If therefore you *neglect* what He has given you in Charge, and *will not prepare to meet Him*, you must suffer the sorest Punishment, for you *shall be beaten with many Stripes* (*t*). Let us then *daily pray*, that our God would *pour upon us the Spirit of Grace and Supplication* (*u*), or we cannot be *faithful*. — But further,

3. We are strongly obliged to make all possible Returns of *Gratitude* and *Praise* for *redeeming Love*. Were

(*p*) Isai. lv. 6. (*q*) Luk. xi. 13. (*r*) Rom. viii. 9.

(*s*) Jude, ver. 19. (*t*) Luk. xii. 47. (*u*) Zech. xii. 10.

Were all the valuable *Talents* given to our Nature at its Creation, *embezzeled* and lost through the *Unfaithfulness* of our common Parent and publick Representative, *the First Adam*, How *thankful* then should we be for JESUS CHRIST, *the Second Adam*, who is *the Lord from Heaven* (w)? He is the infinitely glorious Redeemer, who through his amazing Condescension, in Love to his People, *restored that which he took not away* (x). He has wrought out, and brought in an *everlasting Righteousness* (y), which justifies every Believer from all his Iniquities and Unfaithfulness;——both from the *original Unfaithfulness*, which according to the righteous Constitution of the *first Covenant* is justly imputed to our Nature, and is equally *charged* upon every one of the human Race, while he remains in a State of Impenitence and Unbelief;——and like wise from all those particular Instances of *actual Unfaithfulness*, of which the Believer is convinced he has been guilty in his own individual Person, and which he knows are *more than can be numbered*.

Now must we not all agree, that we can never be *thankful* enough for this glorious Redeemer, and His *perfect Righteousness*: Especially, when we consider, that though every *unjust Steward* will be *condemned* for his *Unfaithfulness* and Sin; yet among all the Sons of *fallen Adam* there is not any one *faithful Servant*, that can

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be justified at the Bar of GOD by his own Works : No, whatever be the *Exactness* and *Faithfulness* with which he performs them. So that every real *Christian* is undoubtedly of the like Sentiments with *Job*, and will be ever ready to adopt his Language, saying, *If I be wicked, Wo unto me ; and if I be righteous, yet will I not lift up my Head* (z).

All true Believers then hold themselves eternally bound to offer the highest *Praises* to the SACRED THREE : To the FATHER, who sent His Son to be *the Propitiation for our Sins* : To the SON, who by His *Obedience unto Death* has made a real and compleat *Atonement* : And to the infinitely blessed SPIRIT, who enables us by Faith to *receive the Atonement* (a) ; and to rely upon it, and plead it, as *the only Foundation* of our Hope of Acceptance with GOD.

And this leads me to add, that by the Doctrines we have now heard,

4. We are excited to an humble *Admiration* of the *rich Grace* which GOD bestows on His *faithful Servants*.

It has been already shewn from the Scriptures, that *the Grace of GOD* is the proper, efficient, and immediate *Cause* of all the *Faithfulness* found in any of His Servants. And it is very natural and just from hence to infer, that Believers are bound to *admire* and *adore* that *Grace*, which makes *themselves* or *others* faithful.

Here

Here I am persuaded, the Hint is no sooner given with Regard to our *admiring the Grace* which makes *others faithful*, but You of *this Congregation* will be presently saying within yourselves, There was in Truth great Reason to *admire the Grace* bestowed upon *your Pastor*; whom God raised up, fitted for his Work, *put into the Ministry*, and made *for you*, as *Epaphras* was for the *Colossians* (b), *a faithful Minister of Christ*.

It is not for me, I confess, to launch out in *Praise of the Deceased*. Such a Practice in *funeral Discourses*, I have been assured from some of his own Family, was *his Aversion*. And yet I cannot think, that any *Restriction* I am under should *wholly prevent* my taking Notice of some remarkable and uncommon *Instances of Faithfulness*, both in his *private Life*, and *publick Ministry*: Especially, since the *just Relation* of these Things may greatly redound to the *Praise of the Glory of the Grace* of God. Nor will it I presume be thought culpable in me, to relate in this publick Manner *some Passages*, which upon certain Occasions for very weighty Reasons he has modestly dropped *concerning himself*, in a free Conversation with *intimate Friends*, or in the Presence of *young Students*, for their Direction, Quickening, or Encouragement.

And since I speak upon good Grounds, I apprehend I may now justly take the Liberty to say, that after he was somewhat advanced in

Youth, he saw himself obliged to make a right Use of *the Talents* which God had given him: And being endued with a *very strong Memory*, he thought it his Duty to make it a *secret Repository* of the Words of Divine Revelation.

Accordingly he treasured up a *larger Portion of the Scriptures*, than perhaps any one besides, whom we have known, ever did. For there are some who can assure us, they had the Account immediately from himself, that he had committed to Memory not a few whole Books, both of the *Old Testament*, and the *New* *. When he mentioned this, he named distinctly *Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Isaiah, and Jeremiah*, with all the *minor Prophets*; and every one of the *Epistles* likewise in the *New Testament*, with the Book of *the Revelation*. And that he might carefully retain the whole of what he had thus learnt, he declared, it was his Practice to repeat them *memoriter* once a Year.—
The special Reason or Motive, which he assigned for his entering upon this Method, deserves a particular Notice. He began it in the *younger Part of Life*, when being under a deep Sense of the *Evil of Sin*, and his Mind sadly ignorant of *God's Way of Salvation* by the *Righteousness* of the glorious *Messiah*, or being in the Dark as to his own personal *Interest* in it, he was sorely distressed with Fears, that *Hell* must be his Porti-
on.

* The Account inserted in *this Paragraph* was not mentioned when the Sermon was preached, as I had not then received the particular and certain Information, or at least not the full and satisfactory Evidence of the Truth of it, which since I have.

on. At that Time it was put into his Heart, that if he *must go to Hell*, he would endeavour to *carry with him as much of the Word of GOD* as possibly he could.—And it seems to me to have been a *secret latent Principle* of the *Fear and Love of GOD*, that established him in this Purpose. For it looks as if he desired to have a Supply of *Scripture Materials* for his Mind to work upon, chusing it should ever be employed in recollecting and reflecting upon *those Records*, that thereby if possible it might be kept from *blaspheming GOD*, like the rest of the Spirits in the infernal Prison.—But *the Grace* which thus engaged him to store up *the holy Scriptures*, at length blessed them to be the means of making him *wise to Salvation, through Faith which is in Christ Jesus*.

Besides a strong Memory, the *Doctor* was favoured with very pregnant *Natural Parts*, and good *Intellectual Abilities*. He was indulged likewise, though not with a very robust, yet with a pretty firm and healthful *Constitution of Body*. These Privileges disposed and enabled him to be diligent in his *Application to Learning*, in a Manner and to a Degree very uncommon. For upon different Occasions I have heard him more than once or twice say, “ That in the vigorous Part of Life it was *his Custom* for some Space, *to sit up, frequently whole Nights*, generally two, and sometimes three in a Week the Year round.” Part of the Night he spent in *religious Exercises*, and the rest of it (as Duty and Occasion required,) in Divine, Philosophical,

cal, Polemical, and other *learned Studies*, which he thought might be helpful to him in the *Work of the Ministry*.

After this Account of himself, we need not be surprized to hear, that one of his Capacity, Learning, and Application, should at length be able to say, as he did, “ that there were *very few*, if any of the *Books*, wrote by the ancient *Greeks*, and handed down to our Times, but what *he had read* in their own Language.” Hereby he acquired great Skill, and a happy Dexterity, in taking *Spoils from the Heathens*, and bringing them into *the Service of the Sanctuary*. The *Greek* being the Language in which the *New Testament* was originally written, he was peculiarly careful to be more *Master of that*, than of any other *Tongue of the Gentiles* whatever. And the LORD helped him to make a *wise and faithful Use* of all his *critical Knowledge* in that, or any other of the learned Languages.

In his Account of Things, *Time* was a most precious *Talent*. This he improved by great Diligence *in his Study*, and by a chearful unwearyed *Attendance* upon the *publick* and stated, as well as *private* and occasional *Functions* of his *Pastoral Office*. He took the Pains to *read over* the Works, both of the *Greek* and *Latin Fathers*; and patiently submitted to the tedious Drudgery of getting a pretty full Knowledge of the artful and corrupt Writings of the *Adversaries of the Truth*, whether of former or later Times; particularly those of *Bellarmin*, of *Thomas Aquinas*, and others of chief Note in the
Church

Church of Rome. Hence he was able to set the State of the *Controversy* between the *Protestants* and the *Papists*, in a clear Light: And when he had pressed the most specious Arguments and Objections against the *Protestant Religion*, with all the Weight the *Adversaries themselves* could urge them, he was so richly furnished with the *Doctrines of Scripture*, and the great Things which GOD has written to us in his Law, that by the Hammer and Spirit of the Word he could, under the Divine Authority, with great Judgment and a very forcible Way of Reasoning, utterly demolish the whole Fabrick treacherously erected by the *Antichristian Builders*.

His Zeal for the *Protestant Doctrines* of the Reformation, and his Care in his Preaching to lay low the *Haughtiness of Men*, to exalt the *Riches of Free Grace*, and to guard against all *Antinomian*, as well as *Arminian* and *Arian Errors*, were well known to You who had the Privilege of his *stated Ministry*, and clearly manifested in the Part he bore in the *Merchant's antient Lecture* at *Pinnars-Hall*, and in the *Lord's Day Evening Catechetical Exercises*, which for some Years were carried on in *Lime-Street*, and of late at *Little St. Helen's*.—His uniform Zeal was discovered also in his private *Lectures in Divinity* to the Students in the *Academy* at *Plaisterer's-Hall*.—And I cannot but suppose, that many of you are acquainted with the excellent little Piece upon the *Godhead of CHRIST*, entitled, *The Exalted Saviour*; which he wrote

at a Time, when *Arianism* was coming in like a Flood, even among the *Dissenters*.

I shall only add concerning him, that they who were most intimately acquainted with him, esteemed him to be a *good Pattern* of real and universal *Benevolence* to Mankind, especially to the Souls of Men; of true *Gospel-Charity*, or unfeigned *Love* to the Brotherhood, and of *Christian Forbearance* towards all that needed it: While at the same Time he was in a very humble, becoming, and exemplary Manner *valiant for the Truth*, standing up in the faithful Publication and Defence of it to the End of his Days. And You, with All that knew him, must allow, that he has ever acted agreeable to the Profession he made, above Thirty Years ago, in his *Dedication to this Church*, of that excellent and judicious Piece of his before mentioned: In which he says expressly, “ I have never been
 “ shy, or shunned to disclose the Counsels of
 “ God; nor do I seek to shelter and cloak my
 “ Opinions in ambiguous Phrases, and *unsatisfactory*
 “ Expressions: But, after painful Study, and diligent Disquisition, what unquestionably to me appears to be the Mind and
 “ Meaning of God, with all Frankness I readily
 “ represent unto you, in the properest and plainest Words I can choose most clearly to reveal, and most determinately to distinguish
 “ my Sense.” A noble Pattern! Highly worthy of the Imitation of *All the Ministers* of JESUS CHRIST. And you that heard his heavenly Discourse, delivered to this Church but
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a very few Hours before his Death, upon those Words in 1 *Pet.* v. 7. *Casting all your Care upon Him, for He careth for you* (in which, as it now appears, Providence had allotted he should give his solemn *parting Advice* to the Congregation :) You, I am perswaded, can think no other, but that *when his Lord came, He found him so doing.*

These Things I have mentioned, not to *ex-tol* the Name or Memory of *the Deceased*, but to *exalt* the *rich* and *free Grace* of GOD; to the humble *Admiration* whereof, you know, *your faithful Pastor* both by his Instructions, and his Example, did constantly invite you. For he was forward to *acknowledge* expressly, as the *Apostle* did, with Regard to all his abundant Labours, *Yet not I, but the Grace of GOD which was with me (c).*

And if any of us have seen and *tasted that the Lord is gracious (d)*, we cannot but own with the like holy *Admiration*, that it is *rich Grace* indeed, which GOD bestows upon *all His faithful Servants*. It is *Grace and Favour*, that gives them *all their Talents*, and all their Inclination or Opportunity of improving them. It is *free Grace*, which first *makes them faithful*, and then *keeps them so*; which strengthens them in all their Duty, Work, and Service, and in all their Attempts to honour GOD: Surely then it must be *rich Grace*, which *through the Redemption that is in Jesus Christ*, mercifully *accepts* and highly *promotes* the *faithful Servant*;

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who at best was but *unprofitable*, and whose Language to Eternity will be answerable to that of the royal Prophet, when he said to the LORD, *All Things come of Thee, and of thine own have we given Thee (e)*. This will for ever be the Declaration, which *all the Saints* will humbly make before GOD, “ We never had any Thing “ but what was thine own, wherewith to serve “ or honour Thee.” And when *Glory* shall at last be conferred upon that *blessed Servant*, whom *Grace alone* had rendered *faithful*, what can be said, but that such is the marvellous Loving Kindness, and such the boundless Mercy of GOD to his Servants, that they *receive Grace for Grace*, that is, a *gracious Reward* after a *Faithfulness* in His Service, which His *Grace alone* could produce. And as it will to *Eternity*, so let it now be the joyful *Shout* of the Saints, *Grace, Grace (f)*: For as *Grace* laid the *Foundation*, so *Grace* must lay the *Head Stone*, in the great Work of Man’s Salvation.—But to conclude,

5. *Lastly*, By what we have heard we are bound to be *faithful in All Things*.

It is our Duty to be *faithful*, in every Situation and Circumstance in Life; *faithful to GOD*, and *faithful to Man*. Here remember, though none can be *faithful to GOD*, unless it be their daily Study, Care, and Practice to be *faithful unto Men*; yet Persons may be *faithful unto Men*, so far as human Laws are concerned, and not
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be faithful unto GOD: But if we would be GOD's Servants, and be counted faithful, we must be upright in All Things; seeking first the Kingdom of GOD, and His Righteousness (g); doing every thing heartily, as unto the Lord (h); living, not unto ourselves, but unto Him who died for us (i); and endeavouring to make the best Improvement of our Health and Strength, and all our Talents.

Particularly, both the Word and Providence of GOD do unitedly call upon us, to redeem our Time (k); and not to be slothful in the important Concerns of GOD's Glory and our own Salvation, but to be fervent in Spirit, serving the Lord (l) with the utmost Diligence; for the Night cometh, wherein no Man can work (m): And we see, it may come very suddenly.— Lamenting therefore past Unfaithfulness, let us endeavour to make a better Use than ever of the Lord's Day, and of those Hours in every Day, which ought to be sacred to the Worship of GOD, and the Exercises of Religion. Be careful to glorify GOD in your Body, and in your Spirit (n), to honour Him with your Substance (o), and with all your Talents, and to walk in the Fear of the Lord at all Times. And as those who wait for his Coming, gird up the Loins of your Mind, be sober, and hope to the End, for the Grace that is to be brought unto every Believer at the Revelation of Jesus Christ (p). Finally,

(g) Mat. vi. 33. (h) Col. iii. 23. (i) 2 Cor. v. 15.
 (k) Eph. v. 16. (l) Rom. xii. 11. (m) John ix. 4.
 (n) 1 Cor. vi. 20. (o) Prov. iii. 9. (p) 1 Pet. i. 13.

Finally, my Brethren, *stand fast in the Lord (q), holding Faith and a good Conscience (r).* And “as Your Watchman thought it his Duty in Faithfulness, (as he himself told You in his *Dedication,*) to forecast for your Safety, and upon Apprehension of approaching Evils to blow the Trumpet in *Zion*: So do You think it yours to take the Alarm, and carefully guard against all threatening Dangers which arise from infectious Principles, as well as those that for ever accompany irreligious Practices.” And let me beseech You, in the Words of the Apostle, that *You forsake not the assembling of yourselves together, but provoke one another unto Love and good Works (s).* Watch against all Dissensions and Divisions, and *endeavour to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace (t).* Be not *Children, tossed to and fro with every Wind of Doctrine (u),* but let your Heart be established with *Grace (w).* Let every one that has sate under the *Doctor’s Ministry,* and every one of us now before the LORD, ever dread to *compass GOD about with Lies and Deceit (x):* But let us plead for *Grace,* to make us *faithful with the Saints;* and being found so at our LORD’s Coming, we shall assuredly be *eternally blessed,* and shall *receive a Crown of Life.* AMEN.

(q) Phil. iv. 1. (r) 1 Tim. i. 19. (s) Heb. x. 24, 25.

(t) Eph. iv. 3. (u) Eph. iv. 14. (w) Heb. xiii. 9.

(x) Hos. xi. 12.

A
Funeral Oration,

Spoken over the

G R A V E

Of the REVEREND

Dr. ZEPHANIAH MARRYAT,

By THOMAS TOWLE.

HAD another, an elder or a fitter Person been appointed for *this* Service it would have been pleasing to me and I am persuaded much more advantageous to you: But as *my Regard for him at whose Grave we now stand, with the repeated Request of his Relict and Family brought me hither, I presume no one will put an unfavourable Construction on my appearing on this Occasion, though I am so much his Junior, and was not many Years ago his Pupil.*

Time would fail me was I to enter minutely into the Character of this truly great and excellent Man, nay in so doing I should act inconsistent with his own Disposition, since he neither
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desir'd nor esteem'd the Applauses of Men. However I am of Opinion that *his peculiarly publick Station in Life, and the many Obligations I am under to him* would render *my entire Silence upon this Head* very unreasonable, very criminal.

He was favoured by Heaven with uncommonly excellent *natural Abilities*. For a quick Apprehension, a fruitful Imagination, a solid Judgment, a retentive Memory, with a peculiarly lively and nervous Elocution, he had (I think I do not express myself too strongly when I say) not *many Equals*, hardly *any Superiors*. Such Parts as these are indeed often a Snare tempting those who are distinguished with them to Sloth and Indolence, but *thus* they were no Snares or Temptations to him; for he was not only a Man of great Abilities, but of so uncommon *Application*, that he has been frequently heard to say, that in the younger Part of Life it was usual with him to study *twelve*, sometimes *fourteen*, nay *sixteen* Hours every Day. From *these* Abilities, and from *this* Application, great Things (by the Blessing of God) might well be expected. Accordingly he did attain to a very large Extent of *Knowledge both humane and divine*, to *so* great a Share of it, that (if my Information be right, and I have the utmost Reason to think it is) he has been spoken of as *an uncommon Scholar* by some who are even to this Day among *the brightest Ornaments* of the learned World.

These Abilities, and *these* Acquirements were happily *sanctified*. The God of Nature and
Providence

Providence bestow'd them, and as the GOD of Grace gave them a spiritual and religious Turn. This being the Mercy of our deceased Friend, he (though he might, and without doubt would have appear'd in the other learned Professions with great Advantage) chose rather the more difficult and arduous Character of a Divine, preferring the too much despised though very honourable Name of Minister of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, to that of the able Lawyer, or the skilful Physician.

For many Years he sustain'd *this* Character in great *Obscurity*, but even *then* he discharg'd his Duty in such a manner as gain'd him an high Place in the Esteem of those who knew his Person and attended his Labours. Nor during *that Period of Retirement* was his Worth confin'd to *his own Congregation*, so far from it, that he gave *the World* a Specimen of his Abilities as a *Divine*, by publishing, in Defence of one of the most important Articles of our holy Religion, *the proper Divinity of our blessed Saviour*, at a Time when it met with peculiar Contempt and Opposition *.

At length it pleas'd God to *call him from that Retirement*, in which he would willingly have spent the Remainder of his Days : Nor was *this* at all to his Discredit ; for he approv'd himself as a *Preacher* to many of the most judicious and experi-

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* In the above Paragraph I refer to that little Piece which the Doctor published in the Year 1719, and which was very justly entitled, *The exalted Saviour* ; for therein our divine Mediator was exalted indeed.

enc'd Christians in *the neighbouring Metropolis* *. And truly I cannot help taking this Opportunity of saying, that notwithstanding *the Disadvantage with which the Manner of his Delivery was attended*, it was scarcely possible (such were the Sprightliness of his Thoughts, the Propriety of his Ideas, the Aptness of his Figures, and the Energy of his Expressions) for any one who heard him with Seriousness and Attention, to go away without Improvement. And *this* was the less to be wonder'd at, as his Heart was very deeply impress'd with a Sense of the Excellency and Importance of his Work, so impress'd with it, that he dreaded the Thought of being laid aside from ministerial Service. And it pleased the Sovereign Disposer of Life and Death to gratify his Servant, by continuing him employed and active to *the very last*; for as to him *Preaching* and *Dying* were at the Distance of only *a few Hours* from each other.

But the Character of *a Minister* was not *the only one* for which Providence had furnish'd or design'd him. Accordingly on the Decease of a very learned and excellent Person †, who had directed the Studies of young Men educating for the Ministry, (being urged by *the repeated Sollicitations* of those who then had the Direction of such publick Concerns) he consented to become *Divinity Professor*. And as to his Behaviour in *that* important and difficult Station, I shall only say, that he so conducted himself as that he gain'd the Affections of all who studied under him, and became (by the Blessing of God) happily

* This Oration was delivered at the Burial Ground belonging to the Doctor's Meeting-Place in *Southwark*.

† The late Reverend Mr. *John Hubbard*.

happily successful for sending into the Ministry several *able* and useful *Ministers of the New Testament*.

His *Temper* was naturally inclin'd to Cheerfulness and Pleasantry, and *this* indeed expos'd him to the Censures of *the Sour and Ill-natur'd*, but gain'd him the Esteem of *thinking* Persons; as well it might, since his Pleasantry and Cheerfulness plainly shew'd that he was free from those unreasonable and odious Designs which are often conceal'd under an austere Look and demure Behaviour.

In *civil Life* he behav'd with an amiable and engaging Propriety, approving himself to all who took Notice of his Conduct, the indulgent Husband, the tender Parent, the good Master, and the faithful Friend.

When he came to *the Close of Life*, he was *resign'd*, nay *cheerful*. He was so far freed from *the Fear of Death*, that he spoke of it in Terms of the utmost Familiarity, and even when that Blow was given which ended in the Dissolution of his mortal Frame, he still retain'd the same Composure and Cheerfulness of Spirit, saying, "That he was going to *Heaven*;" and (with a Smile upon his Countenance) asking a *Friend* who stood near him "If he would accompany him thither;" thus suggesting how largely he partook of the Serenity and Benevolence of *that* happy Region.

Such was the excellent Man to whose *Interment* we are now Witnesses. And what remains? but that adoring the Sovereignty of that great Being

Being *who takes away whom, when, and as he pleases*, we endeavour to collect from *his Removal* all those Hints which so striking and alarming a Providence is suited to suggest.

You, my dear Friend, who had the Honour of standing in the Relation of *a Son* to this excellent Person, will, I am persuaded, permit me to take this Opportunity of reminding you that you should account it an inestimable Mercy to have descended from such *a Parent*, and that you should be thankful to God who continued him with you till your Arrival at Manhood, and Settlement in Life; but then you will allow me to suggest also, that *these Favours* (if you misimprove them) will be attended with unspeakably alarming and dreadful Consequences. Let it then be your Concern to *be a Follower of your deceased Father, as far as he was a Follower of Christ*, for no farther, I am firmly persuaded, would he have *advis'd, or wish'd* you to follow him.

As I see *many of his Church and Congregation* come to attend their deceased Minister to *his long Home*, it surely would be inexcusable should I neglect saying, that his Removal loudly, very loudly addresses *them*. Do you ask me, *my Christian Friends*, what are the Lessons you should learn from it? The Answer is obvious. You should be quicken'd in *Thankfulness* to God who settled so excellent a Man among you, continued him with you, even notwithstanding he had Offers in a secular Way much more advantageous,

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and made his Ministrations of any Advantage to your Souls. You should be awaken'd to an *Enquiry*, whether there have not been those Sins found among you which have hast'ned his Removal? You should be excited to *lament* every particular in which you have slighted or misimproved his valuable Labours. And now he is gone, and *the Places which knew him shall know him no more*, you should be quicken'd to act in just such a Manner as it is reasonable to suppose he would advise you to demean yourselves, was he now to rise from his Grave and speak to you. Particularly you should be stirr'd up to adhere stedfastly to *those sacred Principles of evangelical Truth*, which he thoroughly believed, and zealously defended; to continue together without *dividing*, and without *dispersing*; to exercise a steady Faith in that Jesus, who (though *under Shepherds die*) *lives the great Shepherd* of his Church still; and to seek to him that he would introduce and settle among you a *Workman that needeth not to be askam'd, rightly dividing the Word of Truth*, leaving the *Time and Way* of doing it to his own infinite Wisdom and Grace.

Since many of you who were under his Care with a View to the Ministry are, I observe, collected on this mournful Occasion, I cannot help making thus publickly, an honourable Mention of that dutiful, and affectionate Manner in which I have often heard him with Pleasure say you behav'd towards him while he was among you; and I think it my Duty to remind you also, that
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it is now incumbent on you, to give Evidence that your Affection for him has not died with him, by endeavouring to imitate him in every Thing amiable and praise-worthy, especially in *that close Application to Study* for which he was eminent, and from whence alone, under God, you can form a reasonable Hope of *being and doing* what he *was*, and what he *did*. And while I would have *you* improve the present Providence, I would have *my own Soul* so far improve it, as to be quicken'd by the Removal of one whom I so dearly lov'd, to greater Diligence and Zeal in *working while it is Day*, as not knowing how soon *the Night* may come upon *me*; *that Night* in which no Man can work. Surely what is now beheld suggests many instructive and important Lessons to *all present*. It should lead us *all* to *bate Sin*, to which it is owing that Death is known in our World. It should excite us to *love the Lord Jesus*, who *has abolished Death*, and brought *Life and Immortality to Light* by his Gospel. It should awaken us to endeavour *the best Improvement* of the Labours of our Ministers while we enjoy them, since the Instance before us plainly shows, that *the very ablest Preachers* are equally mortal with *those who hear them*. It should excite to constant *Prayer*, that He who has the Stores of Omnipotence at his Disposal, would pour out *a double Portion of his Spirit* on *surviving Ministers*, and on *those who are training up* to sustain that important and honourable Character. And it should enliven us to be earnest
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in our Addresses at the Throne of Grace, that we may be *prepar'd* to meet Death at *what Time*, or in *what Way* soever it comes to us. And let *those of us who have good Ground to hope that we are in some measure prepar'd* for that great Alteration which we see daily passing on our Fellow-Creatures, learn from what we see to conclude, that the Troubles of this mortal Life shall not last always, but that as certainly as our deceased Friend *has*, we *shall* have our Dismission from the present State of Sin and Changes: Our Souls, like *his*, shall wing their Way to the World of Glory, and our Bodies share in the Triumphs of that blessed Morning when *this breathless Corps*, over which we now stand, and when *the Bodies of all Believers* shall be raised, by the Almighty Power of their returning *Saviour*, from the Dust of Death, glorious and immortal. *Seeing then that we look for such Things, let us be diligent, that we may be found of him in Peace, without Spot, and blameless; and till the Arrival of that blessed Period, let us, my beloved Brethren, be stedfast, immoveable, always abounding in the Work of the Lord, as knowing that then it will appear with Honour to God, and Transport to ourselves, that our feeble and undeserving Labours have not been in vain.*

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